

FORM PTO-1390
(REV. 11-2000)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

CV-31583

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5)

09/937551

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.

PCT/FR00/00740 /

INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE

24 March 2000 (24.03.00)

PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED

31 March 1999 (31.03.99)

TITLE OF INVENTION Crosslinked Acrylic Microparticles, Process for Preparing Them and Uses Thereof in Coatings and Moulding Products

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US PASCAULT, Jean-Pierre, et al.

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☐ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)). The submission must include items (5), (6), (9) and (21) indicated below.
4. ☐ The US has been elected by the expiration of 19 months from the priority date (Article 31).
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☐ is attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☒ has been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☒ An English language translation of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
 - a. ☒ is attached hereto.
 - b. ☐ has been previously submitted under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
7. ☒ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☒ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ An English language translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(3)).
9. ☐ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☒ An English language translation of the annexes of the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11 to 20 below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
15. ☐ A substitute specification.
16. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
17. ☐ A computer-readable form of the sequence listing in accordance with PCT Rule 13ter.2 and 35 U.S.C. 1.821 - 1.825.
18. ☐ A second copy of the published international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
19. ☐ A second copy of the English language translation of the international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
20. ☒ Other items or information:

*Transmittal of Preliminary Examination Report
of the International Application*

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (if known, see 37 CFR 1.5)

09/937551

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.

PCT/FR00/00740

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

CV-31583

21. ☒ The following fees are submitted:**BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)):**

Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482)
nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a) (2)) paid to USPTO
and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$1000.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to
USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$860.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO
but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$710.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO
but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(l)-(4) \$690.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO
and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(l)-(4) \$100.00

ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =**CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY**

\$ 860.00

Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ☐ 20 ☒ 30
months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).

\$ 130.00

CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	
Total claims	28 -20 =	8	x \$18.00	\$ 144.00
Independent claims	1 -3 =	0	x \$80.00	\$ 0.00

MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable) + \$270.00 \$ 0.00

TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =

\$ 1,134.00

☒ Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27. The fees indicated above
are reduced by 1/2. + \$ 0.00

SUBTOTAL =

\$ 1,134.00

Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than ☐ 20 ☒ 30
months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).

\$ 130.00

TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =

\$ 1,264.00

Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be
accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property +

\$ 0.00

TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =

\$ 1,264.00

Amount to be
refunded:

\$

charged:

\$

- a. ☒ A check in the amount of \$ 1,264.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed.
- b. ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. _____ in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees.
A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.
- c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any
overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-2053. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.
- d. ☐ Fees are to be charged to a credit card. **WARNING:** Information on this form may become public. **Credit card
information should not be included on this form.** Provide credit card information and authorization on PTO-2038.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR
1.137 (a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Alan E. Wagner
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SIGNATURE

Alan E. Wagner
NAME

45188

REGISTRATION NUMBER

09/937551

JC16 Rec'd PCT/PTO SEP 26 2001

*See second Preliminary
amendment.* PATENT

Attorney Docket No. CV-31583 (Cas 5548)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of : PASCAULT, Jean-Pierre, et al.
National Stage of PCT Appln No. : PCT/FR00/00740
International Filing Date : March 24, 2000
Claimed Priority Date : March 31, 1999
For : **CROSSLINKED ACRYLIC MICROPARTICLES,
PROCESS FOR PREPARING THEM AND USES
THEREOF IN COATINGS AND MOULDING
PRODUCTS**
Examiner :
Group No. :

CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 CFR 1.10

I hereby certify that, on the date shown below, this correspondence is being:

Mailing

- deposited with the United States Postal Service in an envelope addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231
- As "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" Mailing Label No. EL 810084038US.

Date: September 26, 2001

Jim L. Houck

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT UNDER CFR § 1.121(C)

Please replace claims 1-28 with replacement claims 1-28 submitted on the attached sheets under 37 CFR § 1.121(C). The amendments to the claims eliminate all multiple dependencies and provide technical changes to conform the claim language to standard U.S. practice. No new

matter is added by the claims amendments. The amendments are illustrated by the attached redlined version of the amended claims.

Respectfully submitted,



Alan E. Wagner
Reg. No. 45,188

Date: September 24, 2001

P.O. ADDRESS:

WHYTE HIRSCHBOECK DUDEK S.C.
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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. Crosslinked microparticles of between 10 and 300 nm in size, obtained by polymerization of a composition of ethylenically unsaturated polymerizable compounds, the composition of polymerizable compounds comprising:
 - a first component A representing from 50 to 99 mol% of the composition and selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate, norbornyl (meth)acrylate, cyclohexyl (meth)acrylate, Cardura E10 (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof, optionally in combination with a C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate
 - a second component B consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising at least two ethylenic unsaturations which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, the monomer or oligomer being other than an allylic(meth)acrylate
 - a third component C consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising, in addition to an ethylenic unsaturation which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, at least one reactive function f₁ which is different from the ethylenic unsaturation optionally with at least partial chemical modification of the initial functions f₁ into final functions f₂ under the condition that the functions f₁ selected do not react with each other during the polymerization, with the sum of the components A, B and C being 100 mol%.
2. The microparticles of Claim 1, wherein functions f₁ borne by the component C are selected from the group consisting of: epoxy, hydroxyl, carboxyl, carboxylic anhydride, isocyanate, silane, amine, oxazoline, and, where appropriate, functions f₁ at least partially modified into functions f₂, selected from: (meth)acrylates, vinyls, maleates, maleimides, itaconates, allylic alcohol esters,

unsaturations based on dicyclopentadiene, C₁₂-C₂₂ unsaturated fatty esters or amides, carboxylic acid salts and quaternary ammonium salts.

3. The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component C is present in a molar content of between 0 and 49.5 mol% relative to the sum of the polymerizable compounds, and is selected from the group consisting of: glycidyl (meth)acrylate, C₂-C₆ hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates, (meth)acrylic acid, maleic acid or anhydride or fumaric acid, itaconic acid or anhydride, isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate, dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, and 2-(5-methacryloyl-pentyl) -1,3-oxazoline.

4. The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component B is selected from multifunctional (meth)acrylate monomers of functionality ranging from 2 to 6, substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes and/or multifunctional (meth)acrylic ester oligomers or unsaturated polyesters of functionality ranging from 2 to 50 and with a number average molecular weight Mn of less than 2500.

5. The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises:

- 50 to 95 mol% of a component A selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate, norbornyl (meth)acrylate, butyl (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof
- 0.5 to 10 mol% of a component B consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:
 - di(meth)acrylates of: ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, butanediol, 2-methylpropanediol, neopentyl glycol, hexanediol, diol oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500, preferably polyethers, polyesters or polyurethanes
 - substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes
 - unsaturated polyester oligomers or acrylated acrylic oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500

and having a number of ethylenic unsaturations per mole of from 2 to 50

- not more than 49.5 mol% of a component C consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:

- (meth)acrylic acid, maleic, fumaric or itaconic acid, when f1 is a carboxyl function;
- maleic anhydride or itaconic anhydride when, f1 is a carboxylic anhydride function;
- hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates containing a C₂-C₆ alkyl or mono (meth) acrylates of polyether or polyester or polyurethanediol or polycaprolactone oligomers with an Mn of less than 1500, when f1 is a hydroxyl function;
- glycidyl (meth)acrylate, (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of dicyclopentadiene or epoxidized vinylnorbornene (meth)acrylates or alkoxyated glycidyl ether (meth)acrylates or (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of cyclohexene, when f1 is an epoxy function;
- isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate and urethane mono (meth) acrylates derived from diisocyanates, when f1 is an isocyanate function;
- (meth)acrylates bearing a trialkyl or trialkoxysilane group, when f1 is a silane function;
- dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate or tert-butylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, when f1 is an amine function;
- 2-(5-(meth)acryloylpentyl)-1, 3-oxazoline, when f1 is a oxazoline function;

with the sum A + B + C being equal to 100 mol%.

6. The microparticles according to Claim 1 wherein f1 is carboxyl functions or hydroxyl functions which are partially or totally modified into functions f2 selected from the group consisting of: (meth)acrylate, vinyl, maleate, fumarate, maleimide, carboxylic acid salt or combinations thereof.

7. The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein they bear hydroxyl or epoxy functions f1 possibly partially modified into (meth)acrylate functions f2.

8. A process for preparing the microparticles as defined in Claim 1, the process comprising the steps of:

- polymerizing, via radical-mediated dispersion polymerization, in a non-aqueous medium which is a nonsolvent for the polymer formed, a composition of polymerizable compounds as defined in Claim 1, without any addition of a stabilizing polymer for the microparticles formed, either before, during or after polymerization and optionally,
- chemically modifying, at least partially, the functions f1 borne by the component C.

9. A coating, moulding or composite composition, comprising the microparticles of Claim 1.

10. The composition of Claim 9 consisting essentially of the microparticles of Claim 1 comprising functions f1 and/or f2 which are identical or different and which can be crosslinked between microparticles, forming at least one crosslinking network.

11. The composition of Claim 9 comprising from 0.5 to 50% by weight of the microparticles of Claim 1.

12. The composition of Claim 9 wherein the composition is a coating composition.

13. The composition according to Claim 12 wherein the coating composition is a composition which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking, comprising: (i) acrylic or vinyl mono-or

multifunctional monomers and/or multifunctional acrylic oligomers and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1 bearing f2 functions selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide functions and combinations thereof, the f2 functions obtained from the at least partial modification of the starting functions f1.

14. The composition of Claim 12 wherein the coating composition is a composition which can undergo crosslinking by radiation.

15. The composition of Claim 13 wherein the crosslinkable composition comprises: (i) acrylic monomers selected from the group consisting of: isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, lauryl (meth)acrylate, 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy) ethyl (meth)acrylate, tridecyl (meth)acrylate, 2-phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof, and/or (ii) at least one acrylic oligomer chosen from the group consisting of: polyether (meth)acrylates, polyester (meth)acrylates, polyurethane (meth)acrylates, polycaprolactone (meth)acrylates, epoxy (meth)acrylates and (meth) acrylated acrylic copolymers.

16. The coating composition of Claim 12, characterized in that it is intended to be applied or is applied in the form of a coating on polar or non-polar substrates and comprises:

- 0.5 to 50% and preferably from 5 to 30% by weight of the microparticles of Claim 1, having f2 functions selected from the group consisting of: (meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide and combinations thereof,
 - 50 to 99.5% by weight of at least one monomer chosen from: isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate; lauryl (meth)acrylate; or tridecyl (meth)acrylate,
 - 0 to 5% by weight of a C₂-C₆ alkylenediol di(meth)acrylate
- the percentages being chosen such that the total sum of the microparticles and monomers is equal to 100% by weight.

17. The coating composition according to Claim 16 wherein:

- the polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: glass, steel, aluminum, silicon, polycarbonate, wood, glass fibres, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres;
- the non-polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: polyolefins and more particularly polyethylene, polypropylene and ethylene/propylene copolymers with or without special surface treatment, and coatings of low surface tension.

18. The coating composition of Claim 16 applied to the substrate in the form of a thin film with a thickness of less than 100 microns.

19. The composition of Claim 12, wherein the coating composition is a composition of an aqueous dispersion of a crosslinkable polymer, comprising reactive water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles, which participate in the crosslinking.

20. The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein the composition is a composition comprising epoxidized derivatives.

21. The coating composition of Claim 20, wherein the composition is crosslinkable by UV radiation in the presence of a cationic photo-initiator and comprises microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions fl.

22. The coating composition of Claim 20, wherein the composition is crosslinkable by condensation reaction with at least one second reactive component selected from the group consisting of: polyamines, carboxy functionalized or carboxylic anhydride-functionalized polymers or copolymers; and combinations thereof.

23. The coating composition of Claim 20, when the composition can be

crosslinked by condensation reaction, the composition comprising microparticles having functions f1 and/or f2 selected from the group consisting of: epoxy; hydroxyl; carboxyl; anhydride; and combinations thereof.

24. The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein the composition comprises: (i) at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: alkyds, unsaturated polyesters, saturated polyesters, polyamides, polyurethanes and polyureas and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

25. The moulding composition of Claim 9 further comprising: (i) at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: unsaturated polyesters, dicyclopentadiene resins, vinyl esters, epoxides, polyamines, polyurethanes, polyureas and polyurethane-ureas; and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

26. The moulding composition according to Claim 25, further comprising inorganic and/or organic fillers and/or reinforcing agents chosen from the group consisting of: glass fibres, glass mats, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester and polyamide fibres.

27. The coating composition of Claim 24 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

28. The moulding composition of Claim 25 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. Crosslinked microparticles of between 10 and 300 nm in size, obtained by polymerization of a composition of ethylenically unsaturated polymerizable compounds, ~~characterized in that the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises~~ comprising:

- a first component A representing from 50 to 99 mol% of the ~~said~~ composition and selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ norbornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ cyclohexyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ Cardura E10 (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof, optionally in combination with a C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate

- a second component B consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising at least two ethylenic unsaturations which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, the ~~said~~ monomer or oligomer being other than an allylic(meth)acrylate

- a third component C consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising, in addition to an ethylenic unsaturation which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, at least one ~~second~~ reactive function f1 which is different from the ethylenic unsaturation

optionally with ~~the possibility of~~ at least partial chemical modification of the initial functions f1 into final functions f2 under the condition that the functions f1 selected do not react with each other during the polymerization, with the sum of the components A, B and C being 100 mol%, %.

~~2. Microparticles according to Claim 1, characterized in that they bear~~ 2. The microparticles of Claim 1, wherein functions f1 borne by the component C, ~~which~~ are selected from the group

consisting of: epoxy, hydroxyl, carboxyl, carboxylic anhydride, isocyanate, silane, amine, oxazoline, and, where appropriate, functions f1 at least partially modified into functions f2,

selected from: (meth)acrylates, vinyls, maleates, maleimides, itaconates, allylic alcohol esters,

unsaturations based on dicyclopentadiene, C₁₂-C₂₂ unsaturated fatty esters or amides, carboxylic acid salts ~~or~~ and quaternary ammonium salts.

3. ~~Microparticles according to either of Claims 1 and 2, characterized in that the~~ The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component C is present in a molar content of between 0 and 49.5 mol% relative to the sum of the polymerizable compounds, and is selected from the group consisting of: glycidyl (meth)acrylate, C₂-C₆ hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates, (meth)acrylic acid, maleic acid or anhydride or fumaric acid, itaconic acid or anhydride, isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate, dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, and 2-(5-methacryloyl-pentyl) -1,3-oxazoline.

4. ~~Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the~~ The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component B is selected from multifunctional (meth)acrylate monomers of functionality ranging from 2 to 6, substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes and/or multifunctional (meth)acrylic ester oligomers or unsaturated polyesters of functionality ranging from 2 to 50 and with an a number average molecular weight Mn of less than 2500.

5. ~~Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 4, characterized in that~~ The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises:

- 50 to 95 % mol% of a component A selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ norbornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ butyl (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof

- 0.5 to 10 % mol% of a component B consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:

- di(meth)acrylates of: ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, butanediol, 2-methylpropanediol, neopentyl glycol, hexanediol, diol oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500,

preferably polyethers, polyesters or polyurethanes

- substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes

- unsaturated polyester oligomers or acrylated acrylic oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500

and having a number of ethylenic unsaturations per mole of from 2 to 50

- not more than 49.5 mol% of a component C consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:

- (meth)acrylic acid, maleic, fumaric or itaconic acid, when f1 is a carboxyl function;

- maleic anhydride or itaconic anhydride when, f1 is a carboxylic anhydride function;

- hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates containing a C₂C₆ alkyl or mono (meth) acrylates of polyether or polyester or polyurethanediol or polycaprolactone oligomers with ~~and an~~ Mn of less than 1500, when f1 is a hydroxyl function;

- glycidyl (meth)acrylate, (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of dicyclopentadiene or epoxidized vinylbornene (meth)acrylates or alkoxyated glycidyl ether (meth)acrylates or (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of cyclohexene, when f1 is an epoxy ~~function~~ function;

- isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate and urethane mono (meth) acrylates derived from diisocyanates, when f1 is an isocyanate function;

- (meth)acrylates bearing a trialkyl or trialkoxysilane group, when f1 is a silane function;

- dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate or tert-butylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, when f1 is an amine function;

- 2-(5-(meth)acryloylpentyl)-1, 3-oxazoline, when f1 is a oxazoline function;

with the sum A + B + C being equal to 100 mol%.

6. ~~Microparticles~~ The microparticles according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 5,~~ characterized in that they bear Claim 1 wherein f1 is carboxyl functions f1 or carboxyl hydroxyl functions f1 which are partially or totally modified into functions f2 selected from the group consisting of: (meth)acrylate ~~and/or,~~ vinyl

and/or₂ maleate and/or₂ fumarate and/or₂ maleimide and/or₂ carboxylic acid salt
functions ~~f2.~~ or combinations thereof.

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~~7. Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 6, characterized in that~~

7. The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein they bear hydroxyl functions f1 or epoxy functions which are f1 possibly partially modified into (meth)acrylate functions f2.

8. Process A process for preparing the microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, characterized in that it comprises a step of Claim 1, the process comprising the steps of:

= polymerizing, via radical-mediated dispersion polymerization, in a non-aqueous medium which is a nonsolvent for the polymer formed, of a composition of polymerizable compounds as defined in one of Claims Claim 1 to 5, without any addition of a stabilizing polymer for the microparticles formed, either before, during or after polymerization, it being possible for the said process to comprise, where appropriate, an additional step of at least partial chemical modification of and optionally,

= chemically modifying, at least partially, the functions f1 borne by the component C as defined in one of Claims 1 to 3 and 5.

9. Coating or

9. A coating, moulding or composite composition, characterized in that it comprises microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, comprising the microparticles of Claim 1.

~~10. Composition according to Claim 9, characterized in that it is crosslinkable and consists solely or essentially of microparticles as defined in one of Claims~~

10. The composition of Claim 9 consisting essentially of the microparticles of Claim 1 to 7, comprising functions f1 and/or f2 which are identical or different and which can be crosslinked between microparticles, forming at least one crosslinking network.

11. ~~Composition according to Claim 9, characterized in that it comprises~~ The composition of Claim 9 comprising from 0.5 to 50% by weight of microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7. the microparticles of Claim 1.

~~12. Composition according to one of Claims 9 to 11, characterized in that~~
12. The composition of Claim 9 wherein the said composition is a coating composition.

13. ~~Composition~~ The composition according to Claim 12 ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the coating composition is a composition which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking, comprising: (i) acrylic or vinyl mono-or

multifunctional monomers and/or multifunctional acrylic oligomers and microparticles defined according to one of Claims 1 to 7, bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1 bearing f2 functions selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide functions f2 and combinations thereof, the f2 functions obtained from the at least partial modification of the starting functions f1.

14. ~~Composition according to Claim 12 or 13, characterized in that~~ The composition of Claim 12 wherein the coating composition is a composition which can undergo crosslinking by radiation.

15. ~~Composition according to Claim 13 or 14, characterized in that~~ The composition of Claim 13 wherein the crosslinkable composition comprises, as: (i) acrylic monomers, selected from the group consisting of: isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, lauryl (meth)acrylate, 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy) ethoxyethoxy ethyl (meth)acrylate, tridecyl (meth)acrylate, 2-phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate, and/or, as acrylic oligomers, and combinations thereof, and/or (ii) at least one acrylic oligomer chosen from the group consisting of: polyether (meth)acrylates, polyester (meth)acrylates, polyurethane (meth)acrylates, polycaprolactone (meth)acrylates, epoxy (meth)acrylates and (meth) acrylated acrylic copolymers.

16. ~~Coating The coating composition as defined in one of Claims of Claim 12 to 14, characterized in that it is intended to be applied or is applied in the form of a coating on polar or non-polar substrates and comprises:~~

0.5 to 50% and preferably from 5 to 30% by weight of microparticles as defined the micropart in one of Claims 1 to 7, bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide functions f2

Claim 1, having f2 functions selected from the group consisting of:
(meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide and combinations thereof,

- 50 to 99.5% by weight of at least one monomer chosen from: isobornyl (meth)acrylate,

and/or

isodecyl (meth)acrylate or lauryl (meth)acrylate or tridecyl (meth)acrylate

- 0 to 5% by weight of a C₂-C₆ alkylenediol di(meth)acrylate

the percentages being chosen such that the total sum of the microparticles and monomers is equal to 100% by weight.

17. ~~Coating~~ The coating composition according to Claim 16, characterized in that wherein:

the polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: glass, steel, aluminum, silicon, polycarbonate, wood, glass fibres, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres;

- the non-polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: polyolefins and more particularly polyethylene, polypropylene and ethylene/propylene copolymers with or without special surface treatment, and coatings of low surface tension.

18. ~~Coating~~ The coating composition according to Claims of Claim 16 or 17, characterized in that it is applied to the substrate in the form of a thin film with a thickness of less than 100 microns, preferably less than 50 microns.

~~19. Composition according to Claim 12, characterized in that~~

19. The composition of Claim 12, wherein the said coating composition is a composition of an aqueous dispersion of a crosslinkable polymer, comprising reactive water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles, which participate in the crosslinking.

20. The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein ~~Coating composition according to one of Claims 9 to 12, characterized in that~~ the said composition is a composition comprising epoxidized derivatives.

21. The coating composition of Claim 20, wherein the composition is crosslinkable ~~Coating composition according to Claim 20, characterized in that it can undergo~~

~~crosslinking~~ by UV radiation in the presence of a cationic photo-initiator and comprises microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions fl.

22. ~~Coating composition according to Claim 20, characterized in that it can undergo crosslinking~~ The coating composition of Claim 20, wherein the composition is crosslinkable by condensation reaction with at least one second

reactive component selected from the group consisting of: polyamines and/or, carboxy functionalized or carboxylic anhydride-functionalized polymers or copolymers; and combinations thereof.

~~23. Coating~~ 23. The coating composition according to Claims of Claim 20 and 22, characterized in tha

crosslinked by condensation reaction, it ~~comprises~~ the composition comprising microparticles ~~bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl and/or carboxyl and/or anhydride~~ having functions f1 and/or f2 selected from the group consisting of: epoxy; hydroxyl; carboxyl; anhydride; and combinations thereof.

24. The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein the composition comprises:

~~(i) 24. Coating composition according to one of Claims 9 to 12, characterized in that this composition comprises at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: alkyds or, unsaturated polyesters or, saturated polyesters or polyamides or polyurethanes or polyureas and microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).~~ polyamides, polyurethanes and polyureas and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

~~25. Moulding composition according to Claims 9 to 11, characterized in that it comprises~~

25. The moulding composition of Claim 9 further comprising: (i) at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: unsaturated polyesters, dicyclopentadiene resins, vinyl esters, epoxides and polyamines or polyurethanes and polyureas or polyurethane ureas and microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin(s). polyamines,

polyurethanes, polyureas and polyurethane-ureas; and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

26. Moulding

26. The moulding composition according to Claim 25, characterized in that it comprises further comprising inorganic and/or organic fillers and/or reinforcing agents chosen from the group consisting of: glass fibres, glass mats, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres, and polyamide fibres.

27. The coating composition of Claim 24 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

28. The moulding composition of Claim 25 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

09/937551

PATENT

Attorney Docket No. CV-31583

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of : PASCAULT, Jean-Pierre, et al.
 U.S. Application No. : 09/937,551
 Confirmation No. : 2290
 International Appln. No. : PCT/FR00/00740
 International Filing Date : March 24, 2000
 Claimed Priority Date : March 31, 1999
 For : Crosslinked Acrylic Microparticles, Process for Preparing Them
 and Uses Thereof in Coatings and Moulding Products

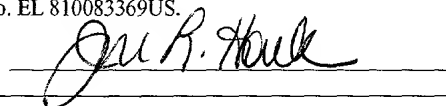
CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 CFR 1.10

I hereby certify that, on the date shown below, this correspondence is being:

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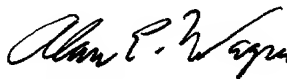
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
 Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT UNDER CFR § 1.121(C)

Please replace claims 1-26 with replacement claims 1-28 submitted on the attached sheets under 37 CFR § 1.121(C). The amendments to the claims eliminate all multiple dependencies, provide technical changes to conform the claim language to standard U.S. practice and add new claims 27 and 28. No new matter is added by the claims amendments. The amendments are illustrated by the attached redlined version of the amended claims.

Respectfully submitted,



Date: December 12, 2001

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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. (Amended) Crosslinked microparticles of between 10 and 300 nm in size, obtained by polymerization of a composition of ethylenically unsaturated polymerizable compounds, the composition of polymerizable compounds comprising:

- a first component A representing from 50 to 99 mol% of the composition and selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate, norbornyl (meth)acrylate, cyclohexyl (meth)acrylate, Cardura E10 (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof, optionally in combination with a C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate
- a second component B consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising at least two ethylenic unsaturations which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, the monomer or oligomer being other than an allylic(meth)acrylate
- a third component C consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising, in addition to an ethylenic unsaturation which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, at least one reactive function f₁ which is different from the ethylenic unsaturation optionally with at least partial chemical modification of the initial functions f₁ into final functions f₂ under the condition that the functions f₁ selected do not react with each other during the polymerization, with the sum of the components A, B and C being 100 mol%.

2. (Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1, wherein functions f₁ borne by the component C are selected from the group consisting of: epoxy, hydroxyl, carboxyl, carboxylic anhydride, isocyanate, silane, amine, oxazoline, and, where appropriate, functions f₁ at least partially modified into functions f₂, selected from: (meth)acrylates, vinyls, maleates, maleimides, itaconates, allylic alcohol esters,

unsaturations based on dicyclopentadiene, C₁₂-C₂₂ unsaturated fatty esters or amides, carboxylic acid salts and quaternary ammonium salts.

3. (Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component C is present in a molar content of between 0 and 49.5 mol% relative to the sum of the polymerizable compounds, and is selected from the group consisting of: glycidyl (meth)acrylate, C₂-C₆ hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates, (meth)acrylic acid, maleic acid or anhydride or fumaric acid, itaconic acid or anhydride, isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate, dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, and 2-(5-methacryloyl-pentyl)-1,3-oxazoline.

4. (Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component B is selected from multifunctional (meth)acrylate monomers of functionality ranging from 2 to 6, substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes and/or multifunctional (meth)acrylic ester oligomers or unsaturated polyesters of functionality ranging from 2 to 50 and with a number average molecular weight Mn of less than 2500.

5. (Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises:

- 50 to 95 mol% of a component A selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate, norbornyl (meth)acrylate, butyl (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof
- 0.5 to 10 mol% of a component B consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:

- di(meth)acrylates of: ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, butanediol, 2-methylpropanediol, neopentyl glycol, hexanediol, diol oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500, preferably polyethers, polyesters or polyurethanes

- substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes
- unsaturated polyester oligomers or acrylated acrylic oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500

and having a number of ethylenic unsaturations per mole of from 2 to 50

- not more than 49.5 mol% of a component C consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:

- (meth)acrylic acid, maleic, fumaric or itaconic acid, when fl is a carboxyl function;

- maleic anhydride or itaconic anhydride when, fl is a carboxylic anhydride function;

- hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates containing a C₂-C₆ alkyl or mono (meth) acrylates of polyether or polyester or polyurethanediol or polycaprolactone oligomers with an Mn of less than 1500, when fl is a hydroxyl function;

- glycidyl (meth)acrylate, (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of dicyclopentadiene or epoxidized vinylnorbornene (meth)acrylates or alkoxyated glycidyl ether (meth)acrylates or (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of cyclohexene, when fl is an epoxy function;

- isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate and urethane mono (meth) acrylates derived from diisocyanates, when fl is an isocyanate function;

- (meth)acrylates bearing a trialkyl or trialkoxysilane group, when fl is a silane function;

- dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate or tert-butylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, when fl is an amine function;

- 2-(5-(meth)acryloylpentyl)-1, 3-oxazoline, when fl is a oxazoline function;

with the sum A + B + C being equal to 100 mol%.

6. (Amended) The microparticles according to Claim 1 wherein fl is carboxyl functions or hydroxyl functions which are partially or totally modified into functions f2 selected from the group consisting of: (meth)acrylate, vinyl, maleate, fumarate, maleimide, carboxylic acid salt or combinations thereof.

7. (Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein they bear hydroxyl or epoxy functions f1 possibly partially modified into (meth)acrylate functions f2.

8. (Amended) A process for preparing the microparticles as defined in Claim 1, the process comprising the steps of:

- polymerizing, via radical-mediated dispersion polymerization, in a non-aqueous medium which is a nonsolvent for the polymer formed, a composition of polymerizable compounds as defined in Claim 1, without any addition of a stabilizing polymer for the microparticles formed, either before, during or after polymerization and optionally,
- chemically modifying, at least partially, the functions f1 borne by the component C.

9. (Amended) A coating, moulding or composite composition, comprising the microparticles of Claim 1.

10. (Amended) The composition of Claim 9 consisting essentially of the microparticles of Claim 1 comprising functions f1 and/or f2 which are identical or different and which can be crosslinked between microparticles, forming at least one crosslinking network.

11. (Amended) The composition of Claim 9 comprising from 0.5 to 50% by weight of the microparticles of Claim 1.

12. (Amended) The composition of Claim 9 wherein the composition is a coating composition.

13. (Amended) The composition according to Claim 12 wherein the coating composition is a composition which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking, comprising: (i) acrylic or vinyl mono-or

multifunctional monomers and/or multifunctional acrylic oligomers and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1 bearing f2 functions selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide functions and combinations thereof, the f2 functions obtained from the at least partial modification of the starting functions f1.

14. (Amended) The composition of Claim 12 wherein the coating composition is a composition which can undergo crosslinking by radiation.

15. (Amended) The composition of Claim 13 wherein the crosslinkable composition comprises: (i) acrylic monomers selected from the group consisting of: isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, lauryl (meth)acrylate, 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy) ethyl (meth)acrylate, tridecyl (meth)acrylate, 2-phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof, and/or (ii) at least one acrylic oligomer chosen from the group consisting of: polyether (meth)acrylates, polyester (meth)acrylates, polyurethane (meth)acrylates, polycaprolactone (meth)acrylates, epoxy (meth)acrylates and (meth) acrylated acrylic copolymers.

16. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 12, characterized in that it is intended to be applied or is applied in the form of a coating on polar or non-polar substrates and comprises:

- 0.5 to 50% and preferably from 5 to 30% by weight of the microparticles of Claim 1, having f2 functions selected from the group consisting of: (meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide and combinations thereof,
 - 50 to 99.5% by weight of at least one monomer chosen from: isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate; lauryl (meth)acrylate; or tridecyl (meth)acrylate,
 - 0 to 5% by weight of a C₂-C₆ alkylene diol di(meth)acrylate
- the percentages being chosen such that the total sum of the microparticles and monomers is equal to 100% by weight.

17. (Amended) The coating composition according to Claim 16 wherein:
- the polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: glass, steel, aluminum, silicon, polycarbonate, wood, glass fibres, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres;
 - the non-polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: polyolefins and more particularly polyethylene, polypropylene and ethylene/propylene copolymers with or without special surface treatment, and coatings of low surface tension.
18. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 16 applied to the substrate in the form of a thin film with a thickness of less than 100 microns.
19. (Amended) The composition of Claim 12, wherein the coating composition is a composition of an aqueous dispersion of a crosslinkable polymer, comprising reactive water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles, which participate in the crosslinking.
20. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein the composition is a composition comprising epoxidized derivatives.
21. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 20, wherein the composition is crosslinkable by UV radiation in the presence of a cationic photo-initiator and comprises microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions fl.
22. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 20, wherein the composition is crosslinkable by condensation reaction with at least one second reactive component selected from the group consisting of: polyamines, carboxy functionalized or carboxylic anhydride-functionalized polymers or copolymers; and combinations thereof.
23. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 20, when the composition can be

crosslinked by condensation reaction, the composition comprising microparticles having functions f1 and/or f2 selected from the group consisting of: epoxy; hydroxyl; carboxyl; anhydride; and combinations thereof.

24. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein the composition comprises: (i) at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: alkyds, unsaturated polyesters, saturated polyesters, polyamides, polyurethanes and polyureas and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

25. (Amended) The moulding composition of Claim 9 further comprising: (i) at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: unsaturated polyesters, dicyclopentadiene resins, vinyl esters, epoxides, polyamines, polyurethanes, polyureas and polyurethane-ureas; and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

26. (Amended) The moulding composition according to Claim 25, further comprising inorganic and/or organic fillers and/or reinforcing agents chosen from the group consisting of: glass fibres, glass mats, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester and polyamide fibres.

27. (new) The coating composition of Claim 24 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

28. (new) The moulding composition of Claim 25 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

28. (new) The moulding composition of Claim 25 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. (Amended) Crosslinked microparticles of between 10 and 300 nm in size, obtained by polymerization of a composition of ethylenically unsaturated polymerizable compounds, ~~characterized in that the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises~~ comprising:

- a first component A representing from 50 to 99 mol% of the ~~said~~ composition and selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ norbornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ cyclohexyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ Cardura E10 (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof, optionally in combination with a C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate
- a second component B consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising at least two ethylenic unsaturations which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, the ~~said~~ monomer or oligomer being other than an allylic(meth)acrylate
- a third component C consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising, in addition to an ethylenic unsaturation which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, at least one ~~second~~ reactive function f1 which is different from the ethylenic unsaturation optionally with the possibility of at least partial chemical modification of the initial functions f1 into final functions f2 under the condition that the functions f1 selected do not react with each other during the polymerization, with the sum of the components A, B and C being 100 mol%, %.

~~2. Microparticles according to Claim 1, characterized in that they bear~~ 2. (Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1, wherein functions f1 borne by the component C, ~~which~~ are selected from the group consisting of: epoxy, hydroxyl, carboxyl, carboxylic anhydride, isocyanate, silane, amine, oxazoline, and, where appropriate, functions f1 at least partially modified into functions f2, selected from: (meth)acrylates, vinyls, maleates, maleimides, itaconates, allylic alcohol esters,

unsaturations based on dicyclopentadiene, C₁₂-C₂₂ unsaturated fatty esters or amides, carboxylic acid salts ~~or~~ and quaternary ammonium salts.

3. ~~Microparticles according to either of Claims 1 and 2, characterized in that the~~(Amended)

The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component C is present in a molar content of between 0 and 49.5 mol% relative to the sum of the polymerizable compounds, and is selected from the group consisting of: glycidyl (meth)acrylate, C₂-C₆ hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates, (meth)acrylic acid, maleic acid or anhydride or fumaric acid, itaconic acid or anhydride, isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate, dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, and 2-(5-methacryloyl-pentyl) -1,3-oxazoline.

4. ~~Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the~~(Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein component B is selected from multifunctional (meth)acrylate monomers of functionality ranging from 2 to 6, substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes and/or multifunctional (meth)acrylic ester oligomers or unsaturated polyesters of functionality ranging from 2 to 50 and with an a number average molecular weight Mn of less than 2500.

5. ~~Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 4, characterized in that~~(Amended) The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises:

- 50 to 95 % mol% of a component A selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ norbornyl (meth)acrylate ~~and/or~~₂ butyl (meth)acrylate and combinations thereof

- 0.5 to 10 % mol% of a component B consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:

- di(meth)acrylates of: ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, butanediol, 2-methylpropanediol, neopentyl glycol, hexanediol, diol oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500, preferably polyethers, polyesters or polyurethanes

- substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes

- unsaturated polyester oligomers or acrylated acrylic oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500

and having a number of ethylenic unsaturations per mole of from 2 to 50

- not more than 49.5 mol% of a component C consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:

- (meth)acrylic acid, maleic, fumaric or itaconic acid, when f1 is a carboxyl function;

- maleic anhydride or itaconic anhydride when, f1 is a carboxylic anhydride function;

- hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates containing a C₂C₆ alkyl or mono (meth) acrylates of polyether or polyester or polyurethanediol or polycaprolactone oligomers with and an Mn of less than 1500, when f1 is a hydroxyl function;

- glycidyl (meth)acrylate, (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of dicyclopentadiene or epoxidized vinylbornene (meth)acrylates or alkoxyated glycidyl ether (meth)acrylates or (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of cyclohexene, when f1 is an epoxy ~~function~~ function;

- isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate and urethane mono (meth) acrylates derived from diisocyanates, when f1 is an isocyanate function;

- (meth)acrylates bearing a trialkyl or trialkoxysilane group, when f1 is a silane function;

- dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate or tert-butylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, when f1 is an amine function;

- 2-(5-(meth)acryloylpentyl)-1, 3-oxazoline, when f1 is a oxazoline function;

with the sum A + B + C being equal to 100 mol%.

~~6. Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 5, characterized in that they bear carboxyl functions f1 or carboxyl functions f1~~ 6. (Amended) The microparticles according to Claim 1 wherein f1 is carboxyl functions or hydroxyl functions which are partially or totally modified into functions f2 selected from the group

consisting of: (meth)acrylate and/or, vinyl and/or, maleate and/or, fumarate and/or, maleimide and/or, carboxylic acid salt functions ~~f2.~~ or combinations thereof.

7. ~~Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 6, characterized in that they bear hydroxyl functions f1 or epoxy functions which are partially~~ 7. (Amended)

The microparticles of Claim 1 wherein they bear hydroxyl or epoxy functions f1 possibly partially modified into (meth)acrylate functions f2.

8. ~~Process~~ (Amended) A process for preparing the microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, characterized in that it comprises a step of Claim 1, the process comprising the steps of:

= polymerizing, via radical-mediated dispersion polymerization, in a non-aqueous medium which is a nonsolvent for the polymer formed, of a composition of polymerizable compounds as defined in one of Claims 1 to 5 Claim 1, without any addition of a stabilizing polymer for the microparticles formed, either before, during or after polymerization, it being possible for the said process to comprise, where appropriate, an additional step of at least partial chemical modification of and optionally,

= chemically modifying, at least partially, the functions f1 borne by the component C as defined in one of Claims 1 to 3 and 5.

9. ~~Coating or~~ 9. (Amended) A coating, moulding or composite composition, characterized in that it comprises microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, comprising the microparticles of Claim 1.

10. ~~Composition according to Claim 9, characterized in that it is crosslinkable and consists solely or essentially of microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7,~~

10. (Amended) The composition of Claim 9 consisting essentially of the microparticles of Claim 1 comprising functions f1 and/or f2 which are identical or different and which can be crosslinked between microparticles, forming at least one crosslinking network.

11. ~~Composition according to Claim 9, characterized in that it comprises~~ (Amended) The composition of Claim 9 comprising from 0.5 to 50%

by weight of microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7. the microparticles of Claim 1.

~~12. Composition according to one of Claims 9 to 11, characterized in that the said~~
12. (Amended) The composition of Claim 9 wherein the composition is a
coating composition.

13. ~~Composition~~(Amended) The composition according to Claim 12
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the coating composition is a composition which can
undergo radical-mediated crosslinking, comprising: (i) acrylic or vinyl mono-or

multifunctional monomers and/or multifunctional acrylic oligomers and microparticles defined according to one of Claims 1 to 7, bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1 bearing f2 functions selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide functions f2 and combinations thereof, the f2 functions obtained from the at least partial modification of the starting functions f1.

14. ~~Composition according to Claim 12 or 13, characterized in that~~(Amended)

The composition of Claim 12 wherein the coating composition is a composition which can undergo crosslinking by radiation.

15. ~~Composition according to Claim 13 or 14, characterized in that~~(Amended)

The composition of Claim 13 wherein the crosslinkable composition comprises, as: (i) acrylic monomers, selected from the group consisting of: isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, lauryl (meth)acrylate, 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy) ethoxyethoxy ethyl (meth)acrylate, tridecyl (meth)acrylate, 2-phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate, and/or, as acrylic oligomers, and combinations thereof, and/or (ii) at least one acrylic oligomer chosen from the group consisting of: polyether (meth)acrylates, polyester (meth)acrylates, polyurethane (meth)acrylates, polycaprolactone (meth)acrylates, epoxy (meth)acrylates and (meth) acrylated acrylic copolymers.

16. ~~Coating~~(Amended) The coating composition as ~~defined in one of Claims 12 to 14~~ of Claim 12, characterized in that it is intended to be applied or is applied in the form of a coating on polar or non-polar substrates and comprises:

0.5 to 50% and preferably from 5 to 30% by weight of ~~microparticles as defined the microparticles of in one of Claims 1 to 7, bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide functions f2~~ Claim 1, having f2 functions selected from the group consisting of: (meth)acrylate, maleate, fumarate, maleimide and combinations thereof,

- 50 to 99.5% by weight of at least one monomer chosen from: isobornyl (meth)acrylate, and/or isodecyl (meth)acrylate or lauryl (meth)acrylate; or tridecyl (meth)acrylate,
 - 0 to 5% by weight of a C₂-C₆ alkylene diol di(meth)acrylate
- the percentages being chosen such that the total sum of the microparticles and monomers is equal to 100% by weight.

17. ~~Coating~~(Amended) The coating composition according to Claim 16, characterized in that wherein:

the polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: glass, steel, aluminum, silicon, polycarbonate, wood, glass fibres, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres;

- the non-polar substrates are selected from the group consisting of: polyolefins and more particularly polyethylene, polypropylene and ethylene/propylene copolymers with or without special surface treatment, and coatings of low surface tension.

18. ~~Coating composition according to Claims 16 or 17, characterized in that it is~~(Amended) The coating composition of Claim 16 applied to the substrate in the form of a thin film with a thickness of less than 100 microns, preferably less than 50 microns.

19. ~~Composition according to Claim 12, characterized in that the said 19,~~(Amended) The composition of Claim 12, wherein the coating composition is a composition of an aqueous dispersion of a crosslinkable polymer, comprising reactive water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles, which participate in the crosslinking.

20. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein the Coating composition according to one of Claims 9 to 12, characterized in that the said composition is a composition comprising epoxidized derivatives.

21. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 20, wherein the composition is crosslinkable ~~Coating composition according to Claim 20, characterized in that it can undergo crosslinking~~ by UV radiation in the presence of a cationic photo-initiator and comprises microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions fl.

22. ~~Coating composition according to Claim 20, characterized in that it can undergo crosslinking~~(Amended) The coating composition of Claim 20,

crosslinked by condensation reaction, it comprises the composition comprising microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl and/or carboxyl and/or anhydride having functions f1 and/or f2 selected from the group consisting of: epoxy; hydroxyl; carboxyl; anhydride; and combinations thereof.

24. (Amended) The coating composition of Claim 9, wherein the composition comprises: (i):

24. Coating composition according to one of Claims 9 to 12, characterized in that this composition comprises at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: alkyds or, unsaturated polyesters or, saturated polyesters or polyamides or polyurethanes or polyureas and microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s) -, polyamides, polyurethanes and polyureas and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

25. Moulding composition according to Claims 9 to 11, characterized in that it comprises 25. (Amended) The moulding composition of Claim 9 further comprising: (i) at least one reactive resin selected from the group consisting of: unsaturated polyesters, dicyclopentadiene resins, vinyl esters, epoxides and polyamines or polyurethanes and polyureas or polyurethane ureas and microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these

~~reactive resin(s), polyamines, polyurethanes, polyureas and polyurethane-ureas;~~
and (ii) the microparticles of Claim 1.

~~26. Moulding~~ 26. (Amended) The moulding composition according to Claim 25, ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ further comprising inorganic and/or organic fillers and/or reinforcing agents chosen from the group consisting of: glass fibres, glass mats, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester ~~or polyamide~~ fibres: and polyamide fibres.

27. (new) The coating composition of Claim 24 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

28. (new) The moulding composition of Claim 25 wherein the microparticles further comprise functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin (s).

CROSSLINKED ACRYLIC MICROPARTICLES, PROCESS FOR
PREPARING THEM AND USES THEREOF IN COATINGS AND
MOULDING PRODUCTS

5 This invention relates to crosslinked acrylic
microparticles of specific composition, to a
preparation process by dispersion polymerization in
non-aqueous medium in the absence of a stabilizing
polymer, and to applications in coating or moulding
10 compositions as reactive or unreactive components
allowing, by virtue of its presence, improved
performance qualities in terms of a compromise between
hardness, flexibility and adhesion to various
substrates, without negatively affecting the other
15 essential performance qualities of the coatings or
moulding products concerned, or the implementation
thereof.

These microparticles and the compositions
containing them can be used in various fields of
20 application such as: protective varnishes, paints,
adhesives, inks, powders for moulding, filled or
unfilled moulding products, and composites which
require significantly improved performance qualities
both in terms of hardness, flexibility and adhesion to
25 various substrates.

The compromise of a common property for a
material, whether this is a coating or a moulding
product or a composite, is always difficult to obtain,
in particular a good hardness/flexibility/adhesion
30 compromise.

One known method for improving the
hardness/flexibility compromise is to incorporate into
a hard matrix a softer additive, or vice versa. For
example, fragile matrices of epoxy/amine type can be
35 reinforced by adding thermoplastics or elastomeric
particles of core-shell type as described in "Toughened
Plastics" Adv. Chem. Series, No. 252 (1996) Ed.
CK. Riew and AJ Kinlock, Am. Chem. Soc., Washington DC.
The major drawback of this solution is a very

considerable increase in the viscosity of the formulations, which poses problems of moulding or of use as a coating.

In the case of coatings, in order to increase the hardness, it is common practice to incorporate multifunctional crosslinking agents into the formulation in order to increase the crosslinking density of the film. The addition of these agents entails an increase in the internal constraints and the heterogeneity of the matrix (Macromol. Chem. Phys., 1998, 1043-1049) and, consequently, a decrease in the flexibility and adhesion of the coating. The use of microparticles in coatings is already known in Prog. Org. Coat., 15, 1988, 373 for improving the mechanical properties of the coating. However, the increase in the breaking stress is achieved at the expense of the flexibility of the material. Moreover, no effect on the adhesion is described.

Specifically, the adhesion is also a key property for coatings and for moulding compositions reinforced with fillers. A general description of the phenomenon of adhesion is given in the Handbook of Adhesion (D.E. Packham, Longman Scientific & Technical, 1992). The adhesion depends, on the one hand, on the interactions between the substrate and the molecules in the coating, and, on the other hand, on the mechanical properties of the coating. Generally, in a homologous series of chemical composition, a harder coating will result in poorer adhesion. Examples of the change of the adhesive properties as a function of the viscoelastic properties in the field of photocrosslinkable coatings are given in the publication of the Proceedings of 3rd Nurnberg Congress, European Coatings Show, paper No. 3, March 1995.

The main drawback of the systems described in the literature is that it is not possible to simultaneously increase two properties such as the flexibility and the hardness. Moreover, the adhesion of

the system generally decreases when the hardness of the material increases.

The present invention overcomes the limitations and drawbacks of the prior art and makes it possible to
5 increase the hardness of materials, such as coatings or moulding products or composites, by the addition of specific crosslinked microparticles, while at the same time conserving, or possibly improving, the level of flexibility of the material and at the same time
10 improving the adhesion of the material to a substrate, and more particularly to difficult substrates, such as polyolefins and more particularly polyethylene or polypropylene and ethylene/propylene copolymers. Another advantage of the microparticles of the
15 invention is their excellent compatibility, thus allowing an incorporation to high levels, with no problems of compatibility and with no negative effect on the rheology of the compositions concerned or on the application conditions, either for coating compositions
20 or for moulding compositions.

More particularly, the present invention makes it possible to obtain coatings with improved hardness and flexibility and with very good adhesion to polar or non-polar substrates, and more particularly coatings as
25 a thin layer of less than 100 μm and preferably less than 50 μm on substrates with difficult adhesion such as polyolefins in general and, more particularly, polyethylene and polypropylene, without a surface treatment. Specifically, this is made possible by
30 virtue of the presence in these compositions of novel crosslinked acrylic microparticles, of essential specific composition and structure and of between 10 and 300 nm in size, which can be adapted to each application.

35 A first subject of the invention relates to crosslinked microparticles of between 10 and 300 nm in size, obtained by polymerization of a composition of ethylenically unsaturated polymerizable compounds,

characterized in that the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises:

- a first component A representing from 50 to 99 mol% of the said composition and consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or norbornyl (meth)acrylate and/or cyclohexyl (meth)acrylate and optionally in combination with a C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate and/or Cardura E10 methacrylate
- a second component B consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising at least two ethylenic unsaturations which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization
- a third component C consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising, in addition to an ethylenic unsaturation which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, at least one second reactive function f1 which is different from the ethylenic unsaturation,

with the possibility of at least partial chemical modification of the initial functions f1 into final functions f2 under the condition that the functions f1 selected do not react with each other during the polymerization, and that the sum of the components A, B and C is equal to 100%. The term "(meth)acrylate" should be interpreted throughout as "acrylate and/or methacrylate".

The preferred size of these microparticles is from 10 to 200 nm and more particularly from 20 to 100 nm. They can be obtained in general by radical-mediated emulsion polymerization in aqueous medium or by dispersion polymerization in non-aqueous medium, of the said composition of polymerizable compounds. An emulsifier is present in aqueous medium, and a stabilizing polymer is present in non-aqueous medium, according to the common techniques known to those skilled in the art and described in the literature, such as in Advances in Polymer Science (1998), vol. 136, p. 139-234. The specificity of these microparticles is associated with their composition.

The component A can consist of a monomer or a mixture of monomers chosen from the (meth)acrylates of: isobornyl, norbornyl, cyclohexyl possibly in combination with a C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate and/or Cardura E10 (meth)acrylate. The C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate can represent from 0 to 30 mol% of the component A. In the case of a mixture of isobornyl, norbornyl and cyclohexyl (meth)acrylates, the isobornyl (meth)acrylate preferably represents at least 50 mol% of the component A.

The preferred component A is isobornyl (meth)acrylate, with a preferred proportion in the composition of the polymerizable compounds of between 60 and 90 mol%. The C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylates are preferably chosen from the (meth)acrylates of: ethyl, propyl, n-butyl, tert-butyl and 2-ethylhexyl and/or Cardura E10 (meth)acrylate.

The component B has a function as a microparticle-crosslinking agent and comprises at least two ethylenic unsaturations per monomeric or oligomeric constituent, these unsaturations being able to undergo radical-mediated polymerization. Preferably, the constituents of B are selected from multifunctional (meth)acrylate monomers of polymerizable ethylenic unsaturation functionality ranging from 2 to 6, substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes and/or acrylic and/or methacrylic multifunctional oligomers or unsaturated polyesters of functionality ranging from 2 to 50 and with an Mn of less than 2500.

More particularly, the component B can consist of a monomer or an oligomer or a mixture of monomers or oligomers or a mixture of monomers and oligomers chosen from:

- di(meth)acrylates of ethylene glycol, of propylene glycol, of butanediol, of 2-methylpropanediol, of neopentyl glycol, of hexanediol, of zinc and/or of calcium, tri(meth)acrylates of glycerol, of trimethylolpropane and/or alkoxyated derivatives, tri- or tetra(meth)acrylates of pentaerythritol

and penta- or hexa(meth)acrylates of dipenta-erythritol, oligomeric diols with an Mn of less than 2500, preferably polyethers, polyesters or polyurethanes

- substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes
- acrylated acrylic or unsaturated polyester oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500, having a number of ethylenic unsaturations per mole of from 2 to 50 and preferably from 2 to 20

with the proportions of the component B in the composition of the polymerizable compounds preferably ranging from 0.5 to 10 mol%.

The component C is an agent for functionalizing the microparticles of the invention. The functions f1 borne by the component C may be identical or different depending on whether or not the component C comprises one or more monomers and/or oligomers of identical or different functions f1, with the condition that, when the functions f1 are different, they do not react with each other during the polymerization. The functions f1 are preferably selected from the following functions: epoxy, hydroxyl, carboxyl, carboxylic anhydride, isocyanate, silane, amine or oxazoline.

The component C is preferably present in a molar content of from 0 to 49.5% relative to the composition of the polymerizable compounds A, B and C and consists of at least one monomer and /or oligomer selected from:

- (meth)acrylic acid, maleic, fumaric or itaconic acid, when f1 is a carboxyl function
- maleic anhydride or itaconic anhydride, when f1 is a carboxylic anhydride function
- hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates containing a C₂-C₆ alkyl or mono(meth)acrylates of polyether- or polyester- or polyurethanediol or polycaprolactone oligomers with an Mn of less than 1500, when f1 is a hydroxyl function

- glycidyl (meth)acrylate, (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of dicyclopentadiene or epoxidized vinylnorbornene (meth)acrylates or alkoxyated glycidyl ether (meth)acrylates or (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of cyclohexene, when f1 is an epoxy function
- isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate and urethane mono(meth)acrylates derived from diisocyanates, when f1 is an isocyanate function
- (meth)acrylates bearing a trialkyl- or trialkoxy-silane group, when f1 is a silane function
- dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate or tert-butylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, when f1 is an amine function
- 2-(5-(meth)acryloylpentyl)-1,3-oxazoline, when f1 is a oxazoline function.

More particularly, the component C is present in a molar content of from 5 to 30% relative to the sum of the polymerizable compounds A, B and C and it is selected from: glycidyl (meth)acrylate, C₂-C₆ hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates, (meth)acrylic acid, maleic acid or anhydride, itaconic acid or anhydride, isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate, dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate.

The functions f1 borne by the component C can be at least partially chemically modified to lead to the presence of modified functions f2 obtained from the functions f1, the functions f2 preferably being chosen from: (meth)acrylates, vinyls, maleates, fumarates, itaconates, allylic alcohol esters, unsaturations based on dicyclopentadiene, C₁₂-C₂₂ unsaturated fatty esters or amides, carboxylic acid salts or quaternary ammonium salts.

The chemical modifications of the functions f1 into functions f2 can be carried out according to the methods already known in the literature. For example, the functions f2:

- (meth)acrylates from the functions f1:

- epoxy, by reaction with (meth)acrylic acid
- carboxyl or anhydride, by reaction with glycidyl (meth)acrylate or hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylate containing a C₂-C₆ hydroxyalkyl
- 5 - maleates or itaconates, from epoxy or hydroxy functions f1 by reaction with maleic or itaconic anhydride
- carboxylic acid salts, from carboxyl functions f1 by neutralization with a base such as sodium
- 10 hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, aqueous ammonia or an amine
- quaternary ammonium salts, from tertiary amine functions f1 by reaction with an inorganic or organic acid
- 15 - allylic alcohol esters, from anhydride functions f1 by reaction with an allylic alcohol
- dicyclopentadiene (DCPD) unsaturation, from carboxyl functions f1 by addition reaction of DCPD
- vinyl, from hydroxyl functions f1 by reaction with
- 20 a vinyl azlactone such as 2-vinyl-4,4-dimethylazlactone or a vinyl isocyanate such as isopropenyldimethylbenzyl isocyanate
- unsaturated C₁₂-C₂₂ esters or amides, from carboxyl or anhydride functions f1 by reaction of an
- 25 unsaturated C₁₂-C₂₂ fatty alcohol or amine.

One specific preferred composition of the microparticles of the invention comprises:

- 50 to 95 mol% of a component A consisting of isobornyl and/or norbornyl (meth)acrylate
 - 30 - 0.5 to 10 mol% of a component B as defined above
 - 0 to 49.5 mol% of a component C as defined above
- with the additional condition that the sum A + B + C = 100 mol%.

Among the preferred microparticles bearing

35 functions f1 at the start, mention may be made of:

- microparticles bearing carboxyl functions f1 or carboxyl functions f1 which have been partially or totally modified into (meth)acrylate and/or

maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide and/or
carboxylic acid salt functions f2

- microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl
functions f1 or epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions f1
5 which have been partially modified into (meth)acrylate
and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide
functions f2.

The (meth)acrylic and/or maleate and/or
fumarate functions are advantageous in compositions
10 which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking: either
via UV radiation or treatment with a beam of electrons,
or via a radical-mediated thermal initiator system such
as a system comprising a peroxide derivative,
optionally in the presence of a decomposition
15 accelerator.

The epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions can
participate in compositions which can undergo
photochemical crosslinking in the presence of a
cationic photo-initiator or via condensation. The
20 carboxyl functions are especially advantageous in
condensation reactions.

The carboxylic acid salts or quaternary
ammonium salts are advantageous in aqueous compositions
on account of their water-dispersible or water-soluble
25 functions, which makes the microparticles concerned
water-dispersible or water-soluble in a water-based
application composition.

The double functionality f1/f2 such as
carboxyl/(meth)acrylate or epoxy/(meth)acrylate and/or
30 maleate and/or fumarate allows the use of
microparticles concerned in dual reactive systems with
a double mechanism of crosslinking per function f1 or
f2. Consequently, the functions f1/f2 of these
crosslinked acrylic microparticles can be adapted as a
35 function of the application and of the host
composition.

A second subject of this invention is a
specific process for preparing microparticles of the

invention, which has the advantage of being simpler and more practical than those already known in the prior art.

This process for preparing microparticles of the invention comprises a step of radical-mediated dispersion polymerization, in non-aqueous medium which is non-solvent for the polymer formed, of a composition of polymerizable compounds A, B and C, as defined for the microparticles of the invention, without the need to add a stabilizing polymer for the microparticles formed, either before, during or after polymerization, it being possible for the said process to comprise, where appropriate, an additional step of at least partial chemical modification of the functions borne by the component C as defined in the invention.

This preparation method thus avoids the drawbacks associated with the presence of a stabilizing polymer:

- problem of availability of the stabilizing polymer and of solubility in the polymerization medium
- negative effect on the performance qualities of the microparticles in terms of compatibility or of reactivity of the reactive functions.

The particular feature of this process is associated with the specific composition of the composition of polymerizable compounds and more particularly with the nature of the component A of the invention as defined above.

Among the specific advantages of the microparticles obtained by this specific process, mention may be made of a compatibility and, depending on the case, a reactivity which are markedly improved without any limitation in terms of availability or of characteristics of the stabilizing polymer.

Moreover, their particular structure, obtained by means of the specific process used, gives the microparticles obtained a self-dispersibility and self-stabilizing nature in a solvent medium which is

identical or comparable to that for the polymerization. Similarly, this process allows the production of crosslinked microparticles which are highly monodisperse in terms of size, which is important for achieving specific rheological and viscoelastic performance qualities in certain applications in the field of coating compositions, moulding compositions or composites.

The solvent used for this process is an organic solvent or a mixture of organic solvents selected from C₆-C₁₀ alkanes such as hexanes, heptanes and more particularly n-heptane, cyclohexane, octanes, nonanes and/or C₃-C₅ alkanols such as isopropanol, butanol or pentanol. Mixtures of non-polar solvents such as heptane with polar solvents such as isopropanol are preferred to adjust the solvating power of the medium relative to the polymerizable compounds, on the one hand, and the non-solvating power of the medium, which becomes a precipitation medium, relative to the polymer formed, on the other hand. The weight ratio between C₆-C₁₀ alkane and C₃-C₅ alkanol can range from 0/100 to 75/25 and more particularly from 25/75 to 50/50. This remains preferred in particular when this mixture is based on n-heptane or cyclohexane, on the one hand, and on isopropanol or butanol, on the other hand.

The weight ratio between the sum of the component A, B and C, on the one hand, and the solvent or mixture of solvents, on the other hand, can range from 10/90 to 50/50 and preferably from 15/85 to 30/70. This ratio is one of the parameters of the process for controlling the size of the microparticles. The more the dilution increases, the greater the tendency of the size of the microparticles to decrease.

The dispersion polymerization of the ethylenically unsaturated compounds is carried out via a radical route by adding a radical initiator commonly used for this type of polymerization, which is suited to the medium. The polymerization temperature is

adapted to the decomposition temperature of the radical initiator chosen and to the boiling point of the solvent medium used and may vary in general, as a function of the initiator and the solvent medium used, from 20°C to 150°C. As examples of initiators, mention may be made of: azo derivatives such as azobisisobutyronitrile (AIBN) and derivatives, peroxides and hydroperoxides or any other initiator system which is soluble in the polymerization medium and known to those skilled in the art. More particularly, these initiators can be functionalized with a reactive function f3 such as hydroxyl or carboxyl, such as, for example, hydroxylated or carboxylated azo derivatives. In this case, the microparticles obtained will be at least partially functionalized with the functions f3. Moreover, other radical initiators can be used for a so-called "controlled" or "live" radical-mediated polymerization, as described in Comprehensive Polymer Science, vol.3, pp. 141-146, Pergamon, London, 1989. Similarly, chain-transfer agents such as mercaptans can be combined with the initiator in order better to control the molecular masses. The polymerization time will depend on the nature and content of initiator and on the polymerization temperature. The usual initiator content can range from 0.05 to 5% by weight relative to the sum of the polymerizable components A, B and C.

According to a first embodiment of this batch process, all of the polymerizable components A, B and C are added, with stirring, from the start in the reactor containing all of the solvent and maintained at the polymerization temperature. The monomers can also be added in solution form in some of the polymerization solvent. The initiation of the polymerization takes place, with vigorous stirring, by gradual addition of the radical initiator chosen, which is soluble in the polymerization medium. After the end of the addition of the initiator, the polymerization proceeds for a time

which can range from 1 h to 8 h depending on the temperature, the nature and content of the initiator, and the nature and overall concentration of polymerizable compounds. The self-stabilized
5 microparticles formed in the polymerization medium can be recovered either after successive steps of precipitation, by adding a non-solvent such as an alcohol in a proportion ranging from 2/1 to 5/1 by weight relative to the dispersion, and then of
10 filtration and drying, or by a single step of evaporating the dispersion-medium solvent, preferably under a reduced pressure of from 10 to 30 mbar.

The final size of the microparticles obtained ranges from 10 to 300 nm and preferably between 10 and
15 200 nm and more particularly from 20 to 100 nm as a function of the dilution of the polymerizable compounds and the nature and molar ratio of the component A chosen. The size of the microparticles can be reduced by increasing the content of component A and/or
20 increasing the level of dilution of the polymerizable compounds and/or increasing the precipitating power of the polymerization medium by adjusting the nature and/or composition of the polymerization-medium solvent. The essential advantage of this process and of
25 its various embodiments is its simplicity and its flexibility in the preparation of a large variety of microparticle structures, by simply varying the nature and proportions of the components A, B and C within the previously defined limits of the invention.

30 According to a second embodiment of this process, it comprises one or more successive steps of continuous and/or batchwise polymerization, characterized respectively by an addition of polymerizable compounds continuously or in a single
35 portion per step concerned, respectively. When the process comprises more than one step of batchwise and/or continuous polymerization, the composition of the polymerizable compounds may be identical or

different from one step to another. Thus, it is possible to prepare very specific microparticle structures of multilayer type as a function of the composition of the polymerizable compounds in each step and as a function of the chronological order of each continuous or batchwise step.

When the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises a component C comprising functions f1, the process as described above can comprise, after the polymerization step, an additional step of chemical modification of the function f1 and/or of the function f2 obtained from f1. This chemical modification step can take place, depending on the case, either before recovery of the microparticles by evaporating off the polymerization solvent, or after recovery of these microparticles, in which case the chemical modification can take place, depending on the case, either in bulk if the viscosity allows it at the modification temperature, or in solution in a solvent which is different from the polymerization solvent if the latter is unsuitable, as regards its boiling point or its chemical inertness. As a preferred example of a chemical modification, mention may be made of the (meth)acrylation of reactive functions such as: epoxy and hydroxyl with (meth)acrylic acid or maleic or fumaric or itaconic acid or anhydride, or carboxylic acid or anhydride with glycidyl (meth)acrylate or hydroxyethyl (meth)acrylate. For example, the (meth)acrylation can take place in solution containing about 30-60% of dispersed microparticles, in the presence of esterification catalysts such as chromium(III) diisopropyl salicylate, chromium(III) ethyl hexanoate, ethyltriphenylphosphonium bromide or tertiary amines.

One variant of this process can comprise, before the polymerization step, a step of dispersion, in the non-aqueous medium, of organic or inorganic microparticles which are insoluble in this medium,

followed by a polymerization step as described above. In this case, the organic or inorganic microparticles in dispersion have sizes adapted to that of the final microparticles to be obtained. The predispersed
5 microparticles can be chosen from organic or inorganic pigments or organic or inorganic fillers or additives or previously prepared microparticles of the invention as already described which are insoluble in the dispersion medium. This process variant allows an at
10 least partial, but simple and practical, coating or encapsulation of the predispersed microparticles, with the aim, for example, of improving their dispersibility in other dispersion media (aqueous or organic media) or of improving their compatibility in recipient matrices
15 for coating, moulding or composite compositions.

A third subject of the invention relates to coating or moulding or composite compositions, comprising microparticles of the invention, as defined above.

20 These compositions are crosslinkable or non-crosslinkable, but are preferably crosslinkable:

- either due to the presence of the microparticles of the invention bearing reactive functions f1 and/or f2 as described above
- 25 - or, independently of the presence of functions f1 and/or f2, i.e. by the reactive functions intrinsic in the initial composition without the microparticles
- or, both by the reactive functions intrinsic in
30 the initial composition and by those of the microparticles.

Among the crosslinkable compositions, it is also possible to distinguish compositions containing solely, i.e. to 100%, or essentially, i.e. between 60
35 and 90%, crosslinked acrylic microparticles bearing functions f1 and/or f2 which are identical or different but which react with each other to form at least one

crosslinking network constituting the matrix either of a coating or of a moulding product.

For example, these compositions can consist solely or essentially of crosslinked acrylic microparticles bearing (meth)acrylate functions f2 which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking either via a common radical-initiated thermal initiator system, containing a peroxide compound and optionally a decomposition accelerator, or via irradiation with radiation such as UV in the presence of a photo-initiator or a beam of electrons in the absence of a photo-initiator. Other examples illustrating these compounds can be cited as coating or moulding compositions consisting solely or essentially of crosslinked acrylic microparticles bearing co-reactive epoxy and anhydride functions f1, respectively.

Another example of such compositions, in particular for coatings, is an aqueous coating composition consisting solely or essentially of crosslinked acrylic microparticles of the invention, bearing functions f1 and/or f2 or comprising a specific structure which makes them water-soluble or water-dispersible and having Tg and minimum film-forming temperature characteristics which make possible their coalescence between 0 and 40°C. Such functions f1 and/or f2 may be, for example, carboxylic acid salts or ammonium salts and more particularly quaternary ammonium salts. As a specific structure of microparticles having this water-soluble or water-dispersible nature, mention may be made of the presence of acrylated oligomers based on polyethers such as polyethylene glycol, preferably with a number-average molecular mass \bar{M}_n of less than 2500 and preferably less than 1500.

In the case of coating or moulding or composite compositions in which the crosslinked acrylic microparticles of the invention are partial components which are reactive or unreactive in the presence of

other reactive or unreactive components of the composition, the content of these microparticles can range from 0.5 to 50% by weight relative to the sum of the organic components in this composition. Apart from
5 the microparticles of the invention, these compositions comprise a base component which is the base organic matrix of the coating or of the moulding product and usual additives or fillers adapted or adjusted as a function of the intended application and within the
10 capability of a person skilled in the art.

As reactive or unreactive additives, the microparticles of the invention can be used in crosslinkable or non-crosslinkable coating or moulding compositions, in general in order:

- 15 - to reduce the viscosity of these compositions, allowing better wetting and better application to the substrates to be coated and, moreover, compositions with a higher solids content and consequently a lower content of volatile organic
20 compounds
- to better control, by specific application, the rheology of these compositions by adjusting the structure of the microparticles
- to reinforce or plasticize the matrix as a
25 function of the compatibility and the Tg of the microparticle relative to the host matrix.

The microparticles as unreactive additives can have functions selected from f1 and f2, as defined in the invention above which, while being chemically inert
30 with respect to the host composition, can substantially improve the compatibility of the microparticle with respect to the host matrix by means of favourable physicochemical interactions.

In the case of microparticles used as reactive
35 additives, their reactive functions are selected and adapted or modified to react with the reactive functions of the host crosslinkable composition or with each other. For example, in the case of a composition

which can undergo radical-mediated, thermal or photochemical crosslinking, containing ethylenically unsaturated monomers and/or monofunctional or multifunctional oligomers, the microparticles, after chemical modification following the polymerization step, will preferably be polyunsaturated. Polyepoxidized or polyhydroxylated reactive microparticles will be adapted for coating compositions of epoxides which can be photocrosslinked cationically in the presence of cationic photoinitiators such as triarylsulphonium or diaryliodonium salts. Polyepoxidized or polycarboxylated reactive microparticles will be adapted for the crosslinking of coating or moulding compositions based on epoxides and on polyamines or on dicarboxylic acid anhydride or carboxylated acrylic copolymers.

Similarly, partially neutralized polycarboxylated microparticles can serve as water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles depending on the degree of neutralization and can be used in coating compositions based on aqueous dispersions of reactive or unreactive polymers. This water-dispersible or water-soluble nature can also be imparted by a component C and/or B having constituents selected, respectively, from the mono- and diacrylates or methacrylates of polyether diols such as polyethylene glycol with an n of less than 1500. In particular water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles bearing acrylate or methacrylate functions after partial modification of their initial functions fl can be used in photo-crosslinkable coatings based on aqueous dispersions of polymers, preferably acrylic polymers. The microparticles used as reactive additives have a genuine reactivity-activating and crosslinking function for the system concerned, on account of their high functionality.

The effect on the mechanical performance qualities of the coating or of the moulded product is

reflected by increased reinforcement and flexibility, as a function of the functionality, compatibility and Tg of the microparticle chemically grafted to the host matrix, the microparticle behaving like a grafted or ungrafted microfiller and/or a hard or flexible microfiller. The cohesion energy of the final material, the coating or moulding product, is thus increased, with a positive effect possible both on the hardness and on the flexibility.

In addition to the hardness/flexibility compromise, the presence of microparticles of the invention allows better adhesion of the compositions concerned to various polar or non-polar substrates. These substrates can be substrates coatable with coating compositions or impregnable as fillers or reinforcing agents in moulding or composite compositions.

As examples of polar substrates on which the compositions containing the microparticles of the invention give good adhesion, mention may be made of: glass, steel, aluminium, silicon, polycarbonate, wood, glass fibres, carbon fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres, and cellulose fibres.

As examples of non-polar substrates which are reputed to be difficult in terms of adhesion, and which give good adhesion performance qualities with the coating compositions and preferably with the coating compositions which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking, mention may be made of: polyolefins, and more particularly polyethylene and polypropylene with or without a special surface treatment, and coatings with a low surface tension, such as photo-crosslinked varnishes.

Among the preferred coating compositions which have a good compromise in terms of hardness/flexibility/adhesion to polar and non-polar substrates, mention may be made of a composition which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking containing

from 0.5 to 50% by weight, preferably 5 to 30% by weight, of crosslinked acrylic microparticles of the invention as defined above, preferably bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or maleimide reactive functions f2 and the said coating composition also comprising mono- or multifunctional acrylic or vinyl monomers and/or mono- or multifunctional acrylic oligomers or unsaturated polyester oligomers.

Mono- or multifunctional acrylic monomers which can be used are acrylic monomers of (meth)acrylic unsaturation functionality per molecule ranging from 1 to 6. More particularly, they can be selected from the following monomers and a mixture thereof: isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, lauryl (meth)acrylate, 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy)ethyl (meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate, 2-phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, tridecyl (meth)acrylate, ethoxylated nonylphenol (meth)acrylate, ethoxylated or propoxylated neopentyl glycol di(meth)acrylate, polyethylene glycol or polypropylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, hexanediol (meth)acrylate, ethoxylated and/or propoxylated trimethylolpropane tri(meth)acrylate.

When oligomers such as unsaturated polyesters are present in the composition, vinyl aromatic monomers can be used, such as styrene or vinyltoluene or allyl phthalate.

Among the mono- or multifunctional acrylic oligomers which may be present in these compositions, and preferably with acrylic monomers, mention may be made of: (meth)acrylate oligomers of functionality ranging from 1 to 50, chosen from: (meth)acrylate polyethers, (meth)acrylate polyepoxides, (meth)acrylate polyesters, (meth)acrylate polyurethanes, (meth)acrylate polycaprolactones or acrylic copolymers of at least one (meth)acrylic ester with glycidyl (meth)acrylate, which copolymers are then at least partially (meth)acrylated in a separate step. The number-average molecular mass of these oligomers or

copolymers remains less than 20,000. In a more specific case of a composition, the crosslinked acrylic microparticles bearing (meth)acrylate functions f2 can completely replace the multifunctional monomer or
5 oligomer of functionality ≥ 2 as crosslinking agent, with markedly improved performance qualities in terms of hardness/flexibility and substrate adhesion.

These compositions can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking:

- 10 - either via a thermal radical-mediated route in the presence of a radical-mediated thermal initiator system comprising a peroxide derivative, such as a common organic peroxide or hydroperoxide, optionally in the presence of a decomposition
15 accelerator such as a tertiary amine or cobalt salts such as cobalt octoate in proportions commonly used by a person skilled in the art, and in general with a content of peroxide derivative of between 0.5 and 6% and a content of decomposition accelerator of between 0.01 and 2%
20 relative to the sum of the monomeric and/or oligomeric components, it being possible for the crosslinking also to be performed at low temperature depending on the presence or absence of a decomposition accelerator for the peroxide derivative
25
- or via a radiation route, either by UV in the presence of a photo-initiator system commonly used in acrylic photo-crosslinkable systems, such as aromatic ketones such benzophenone, α -hydroxy ketones, α -dicarbonyl derivatives, acylphosphine
30 oxides in the presence or absence of tertiary amines, in proportions ranging from 0.5 to 10% relative to the sum of the monomers and/or oligomers in the composition, or by a beam of electrons in the absence of a photo-initiator.
35

More particularly, the preferred composition is a composition which can undergo radical-mediated

crosslinking, which is intended to be applied or which is applied in the form of a coating to polar or non-polar substrates as defined above and which comprises:

- 0.5 to 50% and preferably from 5 to 30% by weight of microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide and/or vinyl functions f2
- 50 to 95% of at least one monomer chosen from isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or isodecyl (meth)acrylate, 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy)ethyl (meth)acrylate, tridecyl (meth)acrylate, lauryl (meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate and 2-phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate
- 0 to 5% by weight of C₂-C₆ alkylene diol di(meth)acrylate

the percentages being chosen such that the total sum of the microparticles and monomers is equal to 100%.

Even more preferably, this composition can undergo radiation crosslinking, either by UV or by a beam of electrons. The preferred thickness of the coatings which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking is less than 100 microns and more particularly less than 50 microns.

One specific case of a coating composition which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking is a composition of an aqueous dispersion of crosslinkable polymer, comprising reactive water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles, which participate in the crosslinking. The aqueous dispersion of crosslinkable polymer can be an acrylic emulsion which may already contain a water-soluble or water-dispersible crosslinking agent based on water-dispersible or water-soluble acrylic multifunctional monomers and/or oligomers of functionality ≥ 2 . Microparticles of the invention bearing, for example, (meth)acrylate functions f2 can partially or totally replace such a water-dispersible or water-soluble multifunctional

acrylic crosslinking agent. The water-dispersibility or water-solubility of such microparticles is ensured, in such a case, by water-soluble functions f1 and/or f2 such as carboxylic acid salts or quaternary ammonium salts or by a specific water-soluble structure of a constituent of the component C of the microparticle, chosen, for example, from (meth)acrylates of polyethylene glycol or of other water-soluble or water-dispersible polyether diols. A composition of an aqueous polymer dispersion can also comprise polymers comprising reactive functions that are intrinsic to this polymer, which may participate in the crosslinking. The crosslinking of these compositions of aqueous dispersion of polymer containing the microparticles of the invention is achieved, after applying a film and film-formation of this composition on a substrate, either by a thermal radical-mediated route or by UV radiation or a beam of electrons.

Another preferred coating composition of the invention is a crosslinkable composition comprising epoxidized derivatives and microparticles of the invention, which is crosslinkable either by UV radiation in the presence of a cationic photo-initiator, or by condensation reaction with at least one second reactive component selected from: polyamines and/or carboxy-functionalized or carboxylic anhydride-functionalized polymers or copolymers.

The epoxidized derivatives are selected from epoxidized monomers, oligomers or copolymers or resins of functionality ranging from 1 to 50. More particularly, in the case of compositions which can undergo photochemical crosslinking in the presence of a cationic photo-initiator, the epoxidized monomers or oligomers are preferably of cycloaliphatic structure. Among the cycloaliphatic epoxidized derivatives, mention may be made of: epoxidized cyclohexene, 3,4-epoxycyclohexylmethyl 3',4'-epoxycyclohexanecarb-

oxylate, the cycloaliphatic epoxides described in WO 98/28286 or WO 98/45349.

When the compositions can undergo cationic photochemical crosslinking, the microparticles of the invention are preferably chosen from microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions f1. The composition which can be crosslinked by condensation preferably comprises microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl and/or carboxyl and/or anhydride and/or isocyanate and/or amine functions f1.

The coating compositions of the invention also apply to compositions comprising at least one reactive resin selected from: alkyds or unsaturated polyesters or saturated polyesters or polyamides or polyurethanes or polyureas with microparticles of the invention, preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin(s).

The functions f1 and/or f2 thus allow better anchoring of the microparticles in the organic matrix with a better reinforcing and/or flexibilizing effect on the organic matrix. For example, in the case of alkyd resins, the functions f1 and/or f2 can be siccative functions such as unsaturations based on dicyclopentadiene or on allylic esters or on unsaturated fatty esters or amides.

In the case of unsaturated polyesters, the functions f2 can be (meth)acrylates and preferably maleates or fumarates. Functions f1 such as anhydride or isocyanate can be envisaged, co-reactive with OH end functions borne by the unsaturated polyester. Carboxyl functions f1 can be envisaged, for example, for maturation of unsaturated polyesters with magnesium hydroxide, according to a process of maturation with magnesium hydroxide which is well known to those skilled in the art. Similar functions f1 can be envisaged and adapted by a person skilled in the art in the case: of saturated polyesters, polyamides or

polyurethanes or polyureas. These coating compositions can comprise, in addition to the reactive components, other common additives or fillers adapted to the specific need of each final application.

5 The invention also relates to moulding or composite compositions which may be moulding compositions comprising fillers and/or reinforcing agents. These moulding or composite compositions can comprise at least one reactive resin selected from
10 unsaturated polyesters, dicyclopentadiene resins, vinyl esters, epoxides and polyamines or polyurethanes and polyureas or polyurethane-ureas or cyanate esters or bismaleimides, with microparticles of the invention preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are
15 reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin(s).

 The moulding compositions containing the microparticles of the invention can comprise inorganic and/or organic fillers and/or reinforcing agents chosen
20 from: glass fibres, glass mats, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres.

 One specific advantage of the microparticles of the invention is that they allow a reduction in the viscosity of the coating or moulding compositions, and
25 consequently a significant reduction in the reactive or unreactive diluents, thereby complying more effectively with the environmental limitations. Thus, on account of their presence, these microparticles simultaneously allow: compliance with a low content of volatile
30 organic compounds (VOC), the incorporation of higher contents of fillers or additives, and improvement of the mechanical properties of the coating or moulding or composite materials concerned. More particularly, the presence of these microparticles of functionality
35 adapted to each application allows a good compromise in terms of hardness/flexibility and adhesion to various substrates and more particularly difficult substrates.

The field of application of these compositions is broad and comprises: protective varnishes, paints, adhesives, inks, powders for coatings, powders for moulding, moulded articles and composites.

5 The examples which follow illustrate the subjects of the invention without limitation.

Examples

General experimental conditions

10 The substrates

The photo-crosslinkable formulations are deposited on the following substrates

- aluminium Q-panel (panel dimensions: 0.6 x 76 x 152 mm³ supplied by the company LABOMAT ESSOR),
15 degreased with ethyl acetate
- glass (cleaned with acetone)
- polycarbonate (LEXAN plaque from the company SCERT PLASTIQUE, 2 mm thickness)
- polypropylene (reference PP301460 supplied by the
20 company GOODFELLOW, thickness 0.5 mm)
- low-density polyethylene (reference ET11452 supplied by the company GOODFELLOW, thickness 0.5 mm)

25 Polycarbonate, polyethylene and polypropylene are precleaned with ethanol before applying the coating.

30 For the need of certain characterizations (for example measurement of the adhesion), the polyolefin (polyethylene and polypropylene) substrates are treated by the Corona process before depositing the formulation (according to the conditions described in Int. Pol. Sci. Technol., No. 8, 1996, p. 630).

Photo-crosslinkable coating formulations

35 In the examples presented below, the coatings are obtained by radical-mediated polymerization of a photo-crosslinkable formulation under a medium-pressure UV lamp of FUSION type (electrical power: 120 W/cm) after 6 passages at 4.6 m/min. These conditions ensure

Characterization

The viscosity of photo-crosslinkable formulations is a very important parameter for using photopolymerized films and for obtaining coatings of low thickness. In the text hereinbelow, the viscosities of the formulations are measured using a CARRI-MED CSL 100 controlled-stress cone/plate viscometer (CSL RHEOMETER) at 20°C, during a shear-rate scanning.

The hardness is measured by instrumented microindentation (FISCHERSCOPE H100 machine) at 23°C. The indenter is a Vickers-type pyramid with a peak angle of 136°. The hardness values presented hereinbelow correspond to the "universal" hardness values calculated according to the expression:

in which P is the maximum load imposed, δ is the indentation depth and k is a constant dependent on the geometry of the indenter. The load P is determined such that:

- The films are analysed systematically 24 hours after polymerization and are stored at 23°C and at 50% relative humidity.

The flexibility of the systems on a substrate is estimated by the "T-bend" test. The test consists in rolling up the coated substrate on itself and in determining the number of turns after which the coating located on the fold is no longer damaged. The

successive turns are denoted by 0 T, 0.5 T, 1 T, etc.
(see description of the test in Lowe C., *Rad. Cur.* Vol.
183, No. 4337, p. 464). In all the cases, the thickness
of the films is less than 50 μm and more generally
5 about 20 μm .

The substrate used is an aluminium of Q-panel
type described above.

The T-bend test is carried out using a manual
press. Detection of the damage is itself carried out by
10 observation using binocular magnifying glasses
(magnification $\times 12$). Good flexibility generally
corresponds to a value of less than or equal to 2 T.

The films are analysed systematically 24 hours
after crosslinking and stored at 23°C and at 50%
15 relative humidity.

Measurement of the mechanical properties of the free film at large deformations

The mechanical properties of free films at
large deformations are measured in uniaxial traction at
20 constant speed (1 mm/min) and at room temperature. The
crosslinked films are cut into a dumbbell shape using a
hollow punch. The test pieces thus obtained are marked
with two reflective pellets 20 mm apart so as to follow
the elongation during deformation using an external
25 extensometer. The effective dimensions of the sample
are typically $20 \times 4 \times 0.1 \text{ mm}^3$.

Measurement of the adhesive properties

The adhesion of the systems is estimated by
means of the cross-cut test (ISO standard 2409) on the
30 substrates mentioned above. A grade ranging from 0 to 5
qualifies the behaviour of the cross-cut film when it
is peeled by an adhesive of known strength (the value
"0" indicates that the film remained totally on the
substrate; "5" indicates that the film was totally
35 peeled off). In our case, the peel force of the
adhesive used (origin: TESA) for the cross-cut test is
 $240 \pm 5 \text{ cN/cm}$ (measured at 180° on a stainless steel
plate). The thickness of the coatings is about 20 μm .

The films are analysed systematically 24 hours after polymerization and stored at 23°C and at 50% relative humidity.

Measurement of the abrasion strength

5 The abrasion strength is measured by the TABER test according to NFT standard 30-015 (5150 ABRASER machine from TABER INDUSTRY). The test consists in measuring the loss of mass entrained by two abrasive wheels after 100 rotations.

10 The films are analysed systematically 24 hours after polymerization and stored at 23°C and at 50% relative humidity.

Measurement of the chemical resistance

15 The resistance of the coatings to a chemical attack is evaluated by the "rub-test" which consists in measuring the time before total deterioration of the film when a continuous circular movement is applied to the surface of this film using a cloth soaked with solvent. In the cases treated below, the solvent is
20 methyl ethyl ketone (MEK). The films are prepared on glass plates.

The thickness of the coating is kept constant and is between 40 and 50 μm in all cases.

Example 1

25 Synthesis of crosslinked polymer microparticles (CPMs)

131.3 g of n-heptane and 131.5 g of 2-propanol are introduced into a 500 ml reactor equipped with a condenser and a mechanical stirrer, and under a gentle flow of nitrogen. The temperature is raised to 70°C. A
30 mixture of (meth)acrylic monomers whose composition is given below is then loaded into the reactor:

- isobornyl acrylate: 69.80 g, i.e. 76 mol%
(relative to the monomers)
- hexanediol diacrylate: 5.02 g, i.e. 5 mol%
35 (relative to the monomers)
- glycidyl methacrylate: 11.96 g, i.e. 19 mol%
(relative to the monomers).

The temperature is stabilized at 70°C and 0.78 g of azobisisobutyronitrile (i.e. 10 mmol/l relative to the monomers) is introduced into the reactor. The reaction takes place under isothermal conditions (70°C) for 5 h, without any significant exothermicity being noted. The dispersion remains transparent and homogeneous, of low viscosity, throughout the duration of the synthesis. At the end of the 5 h of reaction, the conversion of the monomers is greater than 95% according to the monitoring of the monomers by steric exclusion chromatography and by measuring the solids content in the solution. The CPMs formed are isolated by distilling off the synthesis solvents: the condenser is replaced with a distillation column, 87.5 g of toluene are added and the temperature is gradually raised to 105°C.

The CPMs are then acrylated by reaction with an acrylic acid, at 100°C, in the presence of a reaction catalyst, 0.8% by mass of chromium(III) diisopropyl salicylate, and 0.3% by mass of hydroquinone to avoid any radical-mediated polymerization of the acrylic functions. The chemical modification proceeds to 50% of solids, in solution in toluene, in a 250 ml reactor equipped with a condenser and a mechanical stirrer, under a gentle flow of nitrogen. The acrylic acid is introduced in slight excess relative to the epoxide groups, such that the ratio of the concentrations of the functions is: $[\text{acid}]/[\text{epoxy}] = 1.05$. At the end of the chemical modification, the CPMs are isolated by drying under vacuum (20 mbar) at room temperature. The final conversion of the epoxide groups is 95%, which corresponds to a concentration of reactive acrylic double bonds $[\text{C}=\text{C}] = 9.1 \times 10^{-4} \text{ mol/g}$. The dried CPMs are in the form of a solid, which can be ground to a fine powder.

The size and mass of the CPMs are determined by a multiple-angle laser light scattering technique (reference: DAWN from WYATT TECHNOLOGY, operating at

632 nm), on exiting the steric exclusion chromatography columns. The molar mass and size of the CPMs are:

$$\overline{M}_n = 5.8 \times 10^5 \text{ g/mol and } \overline{R}_g = 31 \text{ nm}$$

The temperature of the onset of the glass transition zone, T_g^{onset} , for these CPMs, measured by differential colorimetric analysis, is 62°C.

Example 2

A reference photo-crosslinkable formulation (F1) consisting, on the basis of 100 parts (by weight), of:

- 47.5 parts of isobornyl acrylate (SR 506, CRAY VALLEY)
- 47.5 parts of an acrylated oligomer, reference PRO 971 from SARTOMER
- 3 parts of Darocur 1173 (CIBA GEIGY)
- 2 parts of Irgacure 184 (CIBA GEIGY)

was prepared at room temperature. The acrylated oligomer PRO 971 is a copolymer obtained via a radical-mediated route, corresponding to the product sold in dilution, reference CN 818, by the company SARTOMER and composed of:

- butyl acrylate
- methyl methacrylate
- glycidyl methacrylate.

The glycidyl function of the oligomer is modified in the second step by reaction with acrylic acid to give the acrylated oligomer.

In order to evaluate the provision of CPM regarding the compromise in terms of hardness/flexibility/adhesive of the final film, the photo-crosslinkable formulation below (F2) was prepared:

on the basis of 100 parts:

- 47.5 parts of isobornyl acrylate (SR 506, CRAY VALLEY)
- 19 parts of acrylated CPM of Example 1
- 28.5 parts of PRO 971 (SARTOMER)
- 3 parts of Darocur 1173 (CIBA GEIGY)

- 2 parts of Irgacure 184 (CIBA GEIGY)

The two formulations have a very similar viscosity at 20°C. The results in Table I show that formulation F2 has a shear thinning nature.

- The properties of the corresponding films are summarized in Table II. The thicknesses of the coatings for the hardness measurement are from about 80 to 100 μm .

- Table I - Values of the viscosities of the formulations at 50 and 250 s^{-1} , measured at 20°C

Formulation	Shear rate (s^{-1})	Viscosity (Pa.s)
F1	50	2
	250	2
F2	50	1.77
	250	1.64

Table II - Summary of the physical properties of the films obtained using F1 and F2

-

	Hardness (N/mm^2)	"T-bend" flexibility	Resistance to cross-cutting on glass (adhesion)	Chemical resistance (s)
F1	42	1.5 T	5	80 ± 10
F2	76	1.5 T	1	80 ± 10

Example 3

- The CPMs of Example 1 are introduced into a mixture of acrylic monomers (mixture A) below:

- isobornyl acrylate (SR 506): 60% by mass
- isodecyl acrylate (SR 395, from CRAY VALLEY): 38% by mass
- hexanediol diacrylate (SR 238): 2% by mass

Photo-crosslinkable formulations based on the mixture A and containing different concentrations by mass of CMP are prepared. The compositions are summarized in Table III.

5

Table III - Compositions of the various formulations used in Example 3 (on the basis of 100 parts)

Formulations	Mixture A	CPM	Darocur 1173	Irgacure 184
F3 (ref)	95	0	3	2
F4	90.25	4.75	3	2
F5	87.9	7.1	3	2
F6	85.5	9.5	3	2
F7	80.75	14.25	3	2
F8	76	19	3	2
F9	66.5	28.5	3	2
F10	57	38	3	2

10

Table IV - Viscosity of the formulations at 20°C

Formulations	Shear rate (s ⁻¹)	Viscosity (Pa.s)
F6	50	0.04
	250	0.03
F8	50	0.18
	250	0.14
F9	50	0.65
	250	0.50
F10	50	2.78
	250	2.16

The physicochemical properties (hardness, flexibility, chemical resistance) of the various

coatings are given in the recapitulative Table V. The thicknesses of the films for the hardness measurement are from 20 to 25 μm .

5 Table V - Physicochemical properties of the coatings

Formulations	Hardness (N/mm ²)	"T-bend" flexibility	Chemical resistance (s)
F3	(a)	0 T	20 \pm 10
F8	\approx 5	1 T	55 \pm 10
F9	52	1 T	65 \pm 10
F10	80	1.5 T	60 \pm 10

(a): not measurable (value too low)

10 Table VI shows the results of the abrasion tests, compared with the values obtained with a coating taken as a comparative example having good abrasion strength. The abrasion properties are measured on 80 to 100 μm films.

15

Table VI - Abrasion properties of the coatings

Formulations	Abrasion strength (mg)	Reminder of the hardness values (N/mm ²)
F3	16.3	_(a)
F9	36	52
F10	40.8	80
Reference ^(b)	30	14

(a): not measurable (value too low)

20 (b): composition, per 100 p, of the formulation

- 20 p CN976 (from CRAY VALLEY)
- 52 p CN550 (from CRAY VALLEY)
- 23 p CN501 (from CRAY VALLEY)

- 3 P Darocur 1173
- 2 p Irgacure 184

Table VII shows the adhesion measurements on
5 different substrates.

Table VII - Adhesion properties of the coatings

Form- ula- tions	Alum iniu m	Glas s	Polycar bonate (PC)	Polyeth ylene (PE)	Polypro pylene (PP)	Corona- treated PE	Corona- treated PP
F3	0	0	0	5	5	5	5
F4	0	0	0	5	5	5	5
F5	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
F6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F8	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
F9	0	0	5	5	5	0	0
F10	0	0	5	5	5	5	5

10 These examples illustrate perfectly a
simultaneous increase in the adhesion and hardness
properties in the case of coatings containing CPMs of
the invention.

Example 4

- 15 The formulation prepared contains:
- 46.55 parts (by weight) of isobornyl acrylate
(SR 506)
 - 19.95 parts of 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy)ethyl acrylate
(SR 256 from CRAY VALLEY)
 - 20 - 28.5 parts of CPM of Example 1
 - 3 parts of Darocur 1173
 - 2 parts of Irgacure 184

The mechanical properties measured at 23°C on
the free film are:

- 25 Young's modulus = 130 MPa
Elongation at break = 70%

These results illustrate for this coating a good compromise in terms of hardness/flexibility with good adhesion of the coating to glass and aluminium.

- 5 The reference film without CPM is extremely brittle, with virtually no elongation at break, thus not allowing it to be characterized according to the methods described above.

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CLAIMS

1. Crosslinked microparticles of between 10 and 300 nm in size, obtained by polymerization of a composition of ethylenically unsaturated polymerizable compounds, characterized in that the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises:
- a first component A representing from 50 to 99 mol% of the said composition and consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or norbornyl (meth)acrylate and/or cyclohexyl (meth)acrylate and/or Cardura E10 (meth)acrylate and optionally in combination with a C₂-C₈ alkyl (meth)acrylate
 - a second component B consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising at least two ethylenic unsaturations which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, the said monomer or oligomer being other than an allylic(meth)acrylate
 - a third component C consisting of at least one monomer or oligomer comprising, in addition to an ethylenic unsaturation which can undergo radical-mediated polymerization, at least one second reactive function f1 which is different from the ethylenic unsaturation
- with the possibility of at least partial chemical modification of the initial functions f1 into final functions f2 under the condition that the functions f1 selected do not react with each other during the polymerization,
- with the sum of the components A, B and C being 100%.
2. Microparticles according to Claim 1, characterized in that they bear functions f1 borne by the component C, which are selected from: epoxy, hydroxyl, carboxyl, carboxylic anhydride, isocyanate, silane, amine, oxazoline, and, where appropriate, functions f1 at least partially modified into functions f2, selected from: (meth)acrylates, vinyls, maleates, maleimides, itaconates, allylic alcohol esters,

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unsaturations based on dicyclopentadiene, C_{12} - C_{22} unsaturated fatty esters or amides, carboxylic acid salts or quaternary ammonium salts.

3. Microparticles according to either of Claims 1 and 2, characterized in that the component C is present in a molar content of between 0 and 49.5 mol% relative to the sum of the polymerizable compounds, and is selected from: glycidyl (meth)acrylate, C_2 - C_6 hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates, (meth)acrylic acid, maleic acid or anhydride or fumaric acid, itaconic acid or anhydride, isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate, dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, 2-(5-methacryloyl-pentyl)-1,3-oxazoline.

4. Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the component B is selected from multifunctional (meth)acrylate monomers of functionality ranging from 2 to 6, substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes and/or multifunctional (meth)acrylic ester oligomers or unsaturated polyesters of functionality ranging from 2 to 50 and with an Mn of less than 2500.

5. Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the composition of the polymerizable compounds comprises:

- 50 to 95% of a component A consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or norbornyl (meth)acrylate and/or butyl (meth)acrylate
- 0.5 to 10% of a component B consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:
 - di(meth)acrylates of: ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, butanediol, 2-methylpropanediol, neopentyl glycol, hexanediol, diol oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500, preferably polyethers, polyesters or polyurethanes
 - substituted or unsubstituted divinylbenzenes
 - unsaturated polyester oligomers or acrylated acrylic oligomers with an Mn of less than 2500

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and having a number of ethylenic unsaturations per mole of from 2 to 50

- not more than 49.5 mol% of a component C consisting of at least one monomer and/or oligomer selected from:
 - (meth)acrylic acid, maleic, fumaric or itaconic acid, when f1 is a carboxyl function
 - maleic anhydride or itaconic anhydride when, f1 is a carboxylic anhydride function
 - hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylates containing a C₂-C₆ alkyl or mono(meth)acrylates of polyether- or polyester- or polyurethanediol or polycaprolactone oligomers with Mn of less than 1500, when f1 is a hydroxyl function
 - glycidyl (meth)acrylate, (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of dicyclopentadiene or epoxidized vinylbornene (meth)acrylates or alkoxyated glycidyl ether (meth)acrylates or (meth)acrylates of epoxidized derivatives of cyclohexene, when f1 is an epoxy function
 - isocyanatoethyl (meth)acrylate and urethane mono(meth)acrylates derived from diisocyanates, when f1 is an isocyanate function
 - (meth)acrylates bearing a trialkyl- or trialkoxysilane group, when f1 is a silane function
 - dimethylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate or tert-butylaminoethyl (meth)acrylate, when f1 is an amine function
 - 2-(5-(meth)acryloylpentyl)-1,3-oxazoline, when f1 is a oxazoline function

with the sum A + B + C being equal to 100%.

6. Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 5, characterized in that they bear carboxyl functions f1 or carboxyl functions f1 which are partially or totally modified into (meth)acrylate and/or vinyl and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide and/or carboxylic acid salt functions f2.

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7. Microparticles according to one of Claims 1 to 6, characterized in that they bear epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions f1 or epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions which are partially modified into (meth)acrylate functions f2.
8. Process for preparing microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, characterized in that it comprises a step of radical-mediated dispersion polymerization, in non-aqueous medium which is non-solvent for the polymer formed, of a composition of polymerizable compounds as defined in one of Claims 1 to 5, without any addition of stabilizing polymer for the microparticles formed, either before, during or after polymerization, it being possible for the said process to comprise, where appropriate, an additional step of at least partial chemical modification of the functions f1 borne by the component C as defined in one of Claims 1 to 3 and 5.
9. Coating or moulding or composite composition, characterized in that it comprises microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7.
10. Composition according to Claim 9, characterized in that it is crosslinkable and consists solely or essentially of microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, comprising functions f1 and/or f2 which are identical or different and which can be crosslinked between microparticles, forming at least one crosslinking network.
11. Composition according to Claim 9, characterized in that it comprises from 0.5 to 50% by weight of microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7.
12. Composition according to one of Claims 9 to 11, characterized in that the said composition is a coating composition.
13. Composition according to Claim 12, characterized in that the coating composition is a composition which can undergo radical-mediated crosslinking, comprising acrylic or vinyl mono- or

multifunctional monomers and/or multifunctional acrylic oligomers and microparticles defined according to one of Claims 1 to 7, bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide functions f2 obtained from the at least partial modification of the starting functions f1.

14. Composition according to Claim 12 or 13, characterized in that the coating composition is a composition which can undergo crosslinking by radiation.

15. Composition according to Claim 13 or 14, characterized in that the crosslinkable composition comprises, as acrylic monomers, isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or isodecyl (meth)acrylate, lauryl (meth)acrylate, 2-(2-ethoxyethoxy)ethyl (meth)acrylate, tridecyl (meth)acrylate, 2-phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate, and/or, as acrylic oligomers, at least one acrylic oligomer chosen from: polyether (meth)acrylates, polyester (meth)acrylates, polyurethane (meth)acrylates, polycaprolactone (meth)acrylates, epoxy (meth)acrylates and (meth)-acrylated acrylic copolymers.

16. Coating composition as defined in one of Claims 12 to 14, characterized in that it is intended to be applied or is applied in the form of a coating on polar or non-polar substrates and comprises:

- 0.5 to 50% and preferably from 5 to 30% by weight of microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, bearing (meth)acrylate and/or maleate and/or fumarate and/or maleimide functions f2
- 50 to 99.5% by weight of at least one monomer chosen from isobornyl (meth)acrylate and/or isodecyl (meth)acrylate or lauryl (meth)acrylate or tridecyl (meth)acrylate
- 0 to 5% by weight of C₂-C₆ alkylenediol di(meth)acrylate

the percentages being chosen such that the total sum of the microparticles and monomers is equal to 100%.

17. Coating composition according to Claim 16, characterized in that:
- the polar substrates are: glass, steel, aluminium, silicon, polycarbonate, wood, glass fibres, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres
 - the non-polar substrates are: polyolefins and more particularly polyethylene, polypropylene and ethylene/propylene copolymers with or without special surface treatment, and coatings of low surface tension.
18. Coating composition according to Claims 16 or 17, characterized in that it is applied to the substrate in the form of a thin film with a thickness of less than 100 microns, preferably less than 50 microns.
19. Composition according to Claim 12, characterized in that the said coating composition is a composition of aqueous dispersion of crosslinkable polymer, comprising reactive water-dispersible or water-soluble microparticles, which participate in the crosslinking.
20. Coating composition according to one of Claims 9 to 12, characterized in that the said composition is a composition comprising epoxidized derivatives.
21. Coating composition according to Claim 20, characterized in that it can undergo crosslinking by UV radiation in the presence of a cationic photo-initiator and comprises microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl functions f1.
22. Coating composition according to Claim 20, characterized in that it can undergo crosslinking by condensation reaction with at least one second reactive component selected from: polyamines and/or carboxy-functionalized or carboxylic anhydride-functionalized polymers or copolymers.
23. Coating composition according to Claims 20 and 22, characterized in that, when the composition can be

crosslinked by condensation reaction, it comprises microparticles bearing epoxy and/or hydroxyl and/or carboxyl and/or anhydride functions f1 and/or f2.

24. Coating composition according to one of Claims 9 to 12, characterized in that this composition comprises at least one reactive resin selected from: alkyds or unsaturated polyesters or saturated polyesters or polyamides or polyurethanes or polyureas and microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin(s).

25. Moulding composition according to Claims 9 to 11, characterized in that it comprises at least one reactive resin selected from: unsaturated polyesters, dicyclopentadiene resins, vinyl esters, epoxides and polyamines or polyurethanes and polyureas or polyurethane-ureas and microparticles as defined in one of Claims 1 to 7, preferably comprising functions f1 and/or f2 that are reactive with at least one function borne by this or these reactive resin(s).

26. Moulding composition according to Claim 25, characterized in that it comprises inorganic and/or organic fillers and/or reinforcing agents chosen from: glass fibres, glass mats, carbon fibres, cellulose fibres, polyester or polyamide fibres.

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DECLARATION FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION (37 CFR 1.63)	Attorney Docket Number	CV-31583
	First Named Inventor	Pascault, Jean-Pierre
	COMPLETE IF KNOWN	
	Application Number	09/937,551 ✓
	Filing Date	March 24, 2000
	Group Art Unit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted with Initial Filing	OR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted after Initial Filing (surcharge (37 CFR 1.16 (e)) required)
Examiner Name		

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

Crosslinked Acrylic Microparticles, Process for Preparing Them and Uses Thereof in Coatings and Moulding Products

the specification of which (Title of the Invention)

☐ is attached hereto OR

☒ was filed on (MM/DD/YYYY) 09/26/2001 ✓ as United States Application Number or PCT International

Application Number 09/937,551 ✓ and was amended on (MM/DD/YYYY) (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) or 356(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 356(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or of any PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application Number(s)	Country	Foreign Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Priority Not Claimed	Certified Copy Attached?	
				YES	NO
99/04042 ✓	France ✓	03/31/1999 ✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Additional foreign application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto:

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below

Application Number(s)	Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

☐ Additional provisional application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.

[Page 1 of 2]

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DECLARATION — Utility or Design Patent Application

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States of America, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application

U.S. Parent Application or PCT Parent Number	Parent Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Parent Patent Number (if applicable)
PCT/FR00/00740 ✓	March 24, 2000 ✓	

☐ Additional U.S. or PCT international application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02C attached hereto.

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following registered practitioner(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

☒ Customer Number 1022202

OR
☐ Registered practitioner(s) name/registration number listed below

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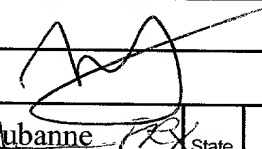
Name	Registration Number	Name	Registration Number

☐ Additional registered practitioner(s) named on supplemental Registered Practitioner Information sheet PTO/SB/02C attached hereto.

Direct all correspondence to: ☒ Customer Number or Bar Code Label 1022202 OR ☐ Correspondence address below

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Address					
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City		State		ZIP	
Country		Telephone		Fax	

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon

Name of Sole or First Inventor:		<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor			
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	<u>Villeurbanne</u>			Country	<u>FRANCE</u>

☒ Additional inventors are being named on the 1 supplemental Additional Inventor(s) sheet(s) PTO/SB/02A attached hereto

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DECLARATION

ADDITIONAL INVENTOR(S)
Supplemental Sheet
Page 1 of 1

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